Alex Franks, left, at his book signing for Noncombatant at Cannock Library watched by fellow veteran Ron Mattison

One final salute for Desert Rat hero Alex

THE funeral has been held of a Desert Rat hero who witnessed the horrors of the Second World War without firing a shot in anger.

An ambulance driver with the 7th Armoured Division, The Desert Rats, Alex Franks experienced every major battle of the North African Campaign but despite never firing a gun, he was captured by enemy forces and thrown into a concentration camp.

The great-grandfather of six, of Wheaton Aston, lived to tell the tale and arrived back home in May 1945.

But it was not until the late 1980s that he finally put pen to paper and started writing his memoirs.

His story, Noncombatant, was published by Midland advertising guru Trevor Beattie, a major supporter of the Staffordshire Regimental Association.

The book tells the story of his capture by the Italians at El Agheila in Libya and being aboard the Italian ship Ariosto SS which was bombed by the British and sank in February 1942.

Memoirs became a book

Held

He said: "When the ship was going down I knew I had to jump in the water.

"I managed to swim to a nearby Italian ship and was pulled aboard."

Brought up in Oldbury, Mr Franks later worked for the town's Albright & Wilson firm.

After 12 months he was given a chauffeur job which he held until he retired.

He dictated his memoirs to an old comrade-in-arms, the late Tom Swallow, after the pair met up in 1987 for the first time since they were in a Russian concentration camp together.

But they remained in dossier form until Staffordshire Regimental Association members sent them to Mr Beattie. Widower Mr Franks was invited to join the association's Hednesford branch as an honorary member five years ago. His wife Irene had recently died.

He said: "They were a real grand crowd and they helped me come out of my slight depression."

Mr Beattie, whose father fought at the Somme, described the book as 'an incredibly powerful piece of work.' The pair met during a battlefields trip to France.

Gordon Taylor, chairman of the Staffordshire Regimental Association's Hednesford branch, said: "Alex was a gentleman."

Mr Franks, who was 94, died at a respite care home in Gailey last month. His funeral was held in Telford.

Becky banking on bike event

A FUNDRAISER is turning to pedal power in aid of the Get Kids Going charity.

Becky Breakwell is to stage a 12-hour duathlon – cycling/running – event on February 27 as part of her preparations for running the London Marathon.

"I have agreed to hold a cycle event, whereby I position myself on my road bike, on a turbo trainer, outside the One Stop store in Hednesford," she said.

Becky has previously run half marathons, and is also training for a triathlon, but London will be her first marathon.

She said she chose Get Kids Going as her charity as she believes it is important that disabled children get the best access to sports.

"This charity provides specialised equipment to enable them to partake in sports," she added.

The 31-year-old, who works as an auditor for One Stop at its head office in Brownhills, is hoping that the shop's customers and passers-by will donate.

"A friend of mine, Louise Sambrook, who was going to be doing the London Marathon but broke her ankle after being knocked off her bike, is going to be cycling some of the day for me, as we were doing it for the same charity," Becky added.

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Child safety app popular

A new app designed to keep kids safe online his proving popular.

Parents in South Staffordshire are being encouraged to download the 'Kash Dash' app on smartphones and tablets given to their children this Christmas.

The app, which was designed by the Office of Staffordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, features Staffordshire's police dogs catching a fleeing crook.

It has prompted more than 9,000 clicks on websites giving safety advice.

Hundreds of extra police to combat sex crimes

POLICE have bolstered the number of officers tackling sex crimes across the West Midlands as it emerged the region is a hotspot for predators.

By Rob Golledge

Wolverhampton has the second highest rate of convicted sex offenders per person in the entire country – with 377 convicted criminals.

Figures show there are also high numbers of sex offenders elsewhere in the Black Country, with 348 in Sandwell, 315 in Walsall and 293 in Dudley. There are more than 1,000 sex offenders in Birmingham and 893 in Staffordshire.

West Midlands Police Chief Constable Chris Sims has now added 275 officers to its Public Protection Unit – the department that deals with sex offences – with a total 793 police officers with 50 civilian staff.

Sent

Chief Inspector Michaela Kerr said: "The number of officers working in Public Protection now accounts for around 10 per cent of the force's total strength – that's a clear indication of our commitment to supporting victims of sex crime, safeguarding vulnerable people, and ensuring offenders face justice. "

Across England and Wales, police and probation are currently monitoring 46,102 registered sex offenders.

Latest figures show there are 2,521 sex offenders in the West Midlands.

South Staffordshire had the lowest number of sex offenders with a rate of 41 per 100,000. South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson said: "I think it is testament to Staffordshire Police's good work and this needs to be kept up."

Between April 2013 and March 2014, 18 sex offenders in Staffordshire were sent back to jail as were 16 in the West Midlands for re-offending or breaching their probation conditions.

Nigel Byford, chairman of West Midlands Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) – the body that manages sex offenders and dangerous criminals – said: "Serious violent and sexual offending make up a relatively small proportion of all recorded crime.

"Yet, by their nature, they cause the greatest concern for the community."

In Staffordshire, a small group of trained and supervised volunteers are working with sex offenders who have served their sentence and are now in the community. The aim is to help prevent re-offending by creating new life plans and by supporting them.

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Jonathan Drake, chairman of Staffordshire MAPPA, said: "Over the next 12 months we are reviewing its effectiveness and contribution to encouraging safer rehabilitation of offenders who have served their sentence."

Panels scheme for monitoring force welcomed

A police chief has welcomed the creation of community panels which will put the work of the local police force under the microscope.

Cannock Chase and Staffordshire councils have been chosen to be among the first to adopt the new scheme set up by Staffordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Ellis.

The pilot panels are being established in February. Others are planned in the following months.

Panellists will meet regularly with their area's policing commander to examine the work done by the force in the area, give feedback to their community and examine the impact of resolutions and restorative justice where they live.

Mr Ellis said: "Police in Staffordshire already undergo the toughest scrutiny ever through the independent ethics, transparency and audit panel which has shone the spotlight on key areas like crime recording and complements the rigorous performance management from my office.

"This approach will be extended through the first Safer Neighbourhood Panels which will act as a sounding board for how policing works and make communities better connected than at any time before."

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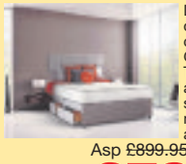
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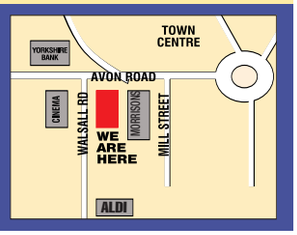

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Children to enjoy wildlife activities

CHILDREN at Busy Bees Nurseries in Burntwood and Walsall are venturing into the great outdoors as part of an initiative developed in partnership with The Wildlife Trusts.

Designed to reignite children's curiosity for the natural world, and in doing so help protect its many wonders for generations of children yet to come, Busy Bees Goes Wild will be run at all of Busy Bees' 236 UK nurseries.

This special learning enhancement has been developed by The Wildlife Trusts exclusively for children who attend Busy Bees' nurseries and will be split into four sections – one for each season. As part of Busy Bees Goes Wild, children will take part in a number of wildlife-themed activities and document their progress in special scrapbooks designed by the charity.

Nursery manager Caroline Cooper at Busy Bees nursery in Burntwood said: "The children are very excited to be taking part in the Busy Bees Goes Wild awards programme, pulling on their wellington boots, hats and scarfs and venturing into the great outdoors to complete a range of fun and educational activities, both at nursery and at home.

"We hope this initiative will enhance our children's understanding and appreciation of nature and its many inhabitants, whilst providing them with an opportunity to have lots of fun."

Youngsters in tears after play centre closure shock

THE owners of a popular soft play centre that closed suddenly over the weekend, leaving youngsters in tears, say they may be forced to sell the business.

Go Bananas in Burntwood shut unexpectedly due to a dispute between the owners and the landlord.

Pre-booked parties had to be cancelled at the last minute and the firm says it is trying to refund customers who paid deposits.

Meanwhile, dozens of parents have continued to flood the company's Facebook page with angry messages about the closure.

Bosses say they are looking to relocate elsewhere but could be forced to sell the business if no alternative sites are found.

The latest statement from the firm on the Facebook page says: "I would like to confirm that Go Bananas Burntwood are looking at different options.

"Either to relocate the business and we are working very hard to find another suitable premises or if we cannot find a suitable premises in the local area, then we would consider selling the business.

Legal

"We are trying to resolve customer refunds by seeking legal advice. Please understand what has happened was out of our control and we are deeply sorry."

It adds: "We are still looking for new premises and have found two properties which may be suitable. Also we do have people interested in buying the business."

On Facebook, parent Sammy Longmore wrote: "Such an awful shame after you'd all worked to hard and it was doing so well."

Russell Cook wrote: "One very upset five year old this morning. We arrived for my son's birthday party to find the notice on the door. What will be happening to my deposit I have paid?"

The owners claim they are still locked out of the soft play centre in Smiths Close, Burntwood, due to the locks being changed on the doors.

Plea on hospital crisis

Jan Sensier, chief executive of Engaging Communities Staffordshire, which delivers Healthwatch, wants to hear from patients

PEOPLE affected by the University Hospital of North Midlands (UHNM) state-of-emergency admissions crisis are being urged to share their experiences with consumer champions Healthwatch Staffordshire.

The organisation is calling on patients whose care may have been affected by the crisis to contact them to ensure influence can be exerted on future service provision.

Staffordshire's biggest hospital declared a major incident this month owing to unprecedented levels of demand affecting Accident and Emergency and general admissions to the Royal Stoke and County Hospital sites.

Jan Sensier, chief executive of Engaging Communities Staffordshire, which delivers Healthwatch, said: "We need to hear from anyone whose care may have been affected by this major incident status – it could be waiting too long for care, lying in an ambulance outside the hospital, being treated in corridors, being diverted a long way from home to other hospitals or even having operations cancelled as a result of the issues at UHNM."

Call 0800 051 8371 or go to www.healthwatchstaffordshire.co.uk/x2

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

CARE to guess what happened when an American man surprised his wife with breakfast in bed, accidentally setting off the burglar alarm at their North Carolina home? No prizes. Tiffany Segule, 27, shot him through the closed bedroom door. Thankfully, he was not seriously hurt. So that's Eggs American-style. Sunny side up with extra lead.

THIS week University College London claimed that by the year 2050 cancer will rarely kill anyone under 80. All I can add is that in 45 years in journalism I cannot remember a time when a cure for cancer was not just around the corner.

SORRY, folks, but after much consideration, Je ne suis pas Charlie. I will march against terrorism. I will march in sorrow and solidarity with the bereaved. I will march in rage and despair at the premeditated slaughter of fellow journalists. But I will not march to defend the absolute right to freedom of expression. There is no such right, and nor should there be.

AS the death of Sir Jack Hayward was announced, Julia Bradbury was exploring Brunel's magnificent Victorian steam ship SS Great Britain in The Wonder of Britain (ITV). Pity she didn't explain why the ship is displayed in glory in Bristol rather than rotting away in the Falkland Islands, as it was for many sorry years. SS Great Britain was saved solely because in 1970 Sir Jack personally paid £150,000 for the hulk to be towed 8,000 miles back to Bristol. Didn't that deserve just a little mention?

DIDN'T Tony Blair look old, ragged and in need of a decent night's sleep during his appearance before a Common committee? Maybe he's worried about the soon-to-be-published Chilcot inquiry (11 bloody years after the event) into the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Don't you hope so?

MEANWHILE, Fiona Bruce breathlessly assures us on BBC News that France's decision to put 15,000 squaddies on the streets is "the biggest ever deployment of troops in France." Does nobody do history any more?

FILMING begins this month for the second series of W1A, the wonderful satire on life, work and corporate-cobbler-speak at the BBC. But how do you satirise something as inherently strange as the Beeb? This week Director-General Tony Hall declared that the corporation was "stuck in an analogue cul-de-sac". Now who wrote that? Was it his own speech writers or the script writers for W1A, going forward?

THERE are many ways of recognising a cultured man. Left alone with a tea cosy, the cultured man will not use it as a hat. The cultured man can hold a sink plunger without feeling obliged to do Dalek impressions. He can hear the William Tell overture without thinking of the Lone Ranger. And as this week's storms descended, a truly cultured man can hear the phrase "yellow snow warning" without sniggering. Yet again, I fail the test.

AM I missing something? Ed Miliband is castigated for "weaponising" the NHS to use it to batter the Tories, and seems determined to refute the allegation. But can anyone remember an election campaign when the NHS was not a weapon in the armoury? The important thing, as Tony Blair discovered during that memorable slagging-off by no-nonsense Brummie Sharron Storer in a 2001 hospital visit ("All you do is walk around and make yourself known but you don't do anything to help anybody.") is to remember the NHS is double-edged and can cut both ways. It is a high-risk weapon for any politician to wield, especially one who can't even cope with a bacon sandwich.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Website to keep residents informed

RESIDENTS can now keep up to date with events in their town thanks to the launch of a new community website.

Burntwood Town Council have joined with local web design company In Life Design Ltd to launch the new site, www. burntwoodtown.co.uk

It will contain news about the town, forthcoming events, details of community and voluntary groups and business listings and will launch on January 30.

Burntwood Town Council leader Councillor Di Evans said: "The new website will be one straightforward and convenient place to go for all local information.

"I hope local residents make good use of it, particularly as the town council develop new strategies, such as our neighbourhood plan. Residents can keep in touch with the latest developments and make sure they can have their say".

David Whitehouse, managing director of In Life Design Ltd, said: "We were delighted to help the town council improve the web presence of the town and believe it will be of real benefit for local people and business". As part of the launch, primary school pupils have been designing the homepage banner that will be on the website when it launches.

The deadline for entries from each school is tomorrow and need to be emailed to info@inlife.co.uk

For more information, visit www.burntwoodtown.co.uk or call Burntwood Town Council on 01543 677166.

We found trees at side of road, claim thieves

THIEVES who took Christmas trees worth almost £700 from Cannock Chase claimed they did not cut them down – they found them.

Joseph Hall, aged 22, and Lee Jones, 30, were caught with 10 trees in the back of a transit van on November 27. The pair appeared before Cannock Magistrates Court on January 12 and both defendants pleaded guilty to stealing 10 Christmas trees.

They also pleaded guilty to damaging another five.

By Katy-Rose Meaney

Miss Zoe Speake, prosecuting, said: "A forestry worker and an off-duty police officer were witness to the theft which happened half a mile from Birches Valley in Rugeley on Penkridge bank.

"A white Ford transit van had stopped on the road and two men were pulling trees towards the van. The off-duty police officer followed the van before calling the police.

Damaged

"Mr Jones was driving the van and when police arrived, both men were arrested."

A total of 10 trees were recovered from the van, each valued at £45 and described by the forestry worker as 'freshly cut'. Miss Speake added: "The trees cut down were timber trees and not trees sold as Christmas trees because they do not meet European regulations."

The damaged trees were also valued at £45 each and the total loss to the Forestry Commission was £675.

Jones, a scrap collector, told the court he decided to take the trees home for his family. He denied cutting them down and said he had found them at the side of the road.

Hall also denied cutting down the trees and said he took them for personal use and not for monetary gain.

Mr Mark Harrison, defending, said: "They accept they should not have taken them but claim they did not cut them down. Both defendants also dispute the value of the trees."

Hall and Jones, both of Fountains Road, Bloxwich, were both given a 12-month conditional discharge and ordered to repay the Forestry Commission full compensation for the trees.

In total, each defendant was ordered to pay £337.50 compensation to the Forestry Commission, £50 costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

The Forestry Commission said it was satisfied with the conviction for illegal felling at Birches Valley.

Art deco shop to open

A SHOP selling art deco items is to open in Rugeley. Lynne Morely and Paolo Allen, both from Rugeley, have been collecting art deco for several years and have now decided to offer local people the chance to buy items from their collection. Paolo said: "We have lots of items from period lighting, pottery and glass to small pieces of furniture and artwork. It really has been something of an obsession over the last thirty years and it's now time to let some of it go. Mind you, it just means that we will more than likely go out and gather even more!" Decodance in the Brewery Street Shopping Arcade will be open from 9am on Monday.

Paloma in return to Chase

Paloma Faith says she is excited to be performing on Cannock Chase again

PALOMA FAITH is to perform on Cannock Chase this summer, it has been announced.

The singer will take to the stage at Forest Live on July 10 as part of the Forestry Commission's outdoor concert series. She performed a sell-out gig on the Chase last year.

Income generated from ticket sales at Forest Live is spent on protecting, improving and expanding England's forests and woodlands and increasing their value to people and wildlife.

The 33-year-old Only Love Can Hurt Like This singer will join Tom Odell, whose version of Real Love was used on the John Lewis Christmas advert, who is also performing at Forest Live on July 12. A third and final act is still to be announced.

Faith said: "I am so excited to do the forest tour. I did it before and had such a wonderful time.

"We are very lucky in Britain to have such a beautiful and diverse landscape and I am excited to play for you there again."

Tickets go on sale at 9am tomorrow.

Care firm to create 50 jobs this year

HOME Instead Senior Care, which provides care to people in their own homes in Cannock, has announced the creation of 50 jobs for the year ahead in a major recruitment drive starting this month.

The need to employ more carers in the local area is a reflection of a national trend which is a result of the ageing population.

A report from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills has identified the need to recruit more than half a million carers by 2022. The report also listed caring as one of the careers of the future.

Fran Sayer of Home Instead said: "We are receiving more and more calls from local people and family members looking for home care, and our business has grown significantly as a result.

"For people with no prior experience, we provide a full training programme so anyone who is interested in a rewarding career in the growing sector should get in touch. It is the unique and high-quality, personal service that has allowed us to grow so quickly and create these jobs in the local area."

Go to www.homeinstead.co.uk/cannock or call 01543 572349 for further details.

Raffle raises school funds

A SPECIAL school has been given a funding boost thanks to a raffle.

Saxon Hill Community School in Lichfield worked with local IT company brokenStones to organise the event for the school that helps youngsters with physical disabilities and complex medical needs.

More than £700 was raised. One of the prizes was a bottle of vintage Dom Perignon donated by MD of brokenStones, Chris Blunt.

Other prizes included tickets to the SeaLife Centre and products and vouchers from Lichfield businesses.

Appeal for gifts

BRITISH Heart Foundation (BHF) shops is looking for more donations of unwanted Christmas presents.

The profit raised from BHF shops goe to fund life-saving research into heart disease.

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JCB fined £25k over injuries to worker, 56

JCB has been fined £25,000 after a worker was left with multiple injuries after being crushed during the assembly of a telescopic handler.

Roger Pearce, aged 56, of Newcastle-under-Lyme, was installing the vehicle's offside light and mirror arm at the digger manufacturer 's Lakeside works in Rocester when the incident happened on June 3, 2013.

Staffordshire Magistrates Court was told Mr Pearce had to crouch down so could not be seen by a colleague testing the steering, resulting in him being crushed between a wheel and the bodywork.

He fractured 10 ribs, damaged the bones at the base of his spine, and injured his bladder and kidney. He was in hospital for 10 days and is still undergoing treatment.

He has not been able to return to work. JC Bamford Excavators pleaded guity to breaching the Health & Safety at Work Act and was fined £25,000 and ordered to pay £1,390 costs.

The Health & Safety Executive found the accident happened after changes to the assembly line meant the fitting of the front offside light and mirror arm moved to where functions such as steering were tested.

Traditional workshops

TRADITIONAL craft workshops are being held for people with dementia.

The events at the Museum of Cannock Chase have been designed for people with the condition.

On February 23 visitors can make willow butterflies. 'God's eyes' - yarn weavings used a spiritual objects – will be made on March 19.

The events at the museum in Valley Road, Hednesford will be run by expert Dave Knowles.

Places for the workshops must be booked and they can be reserved by calling 01543 877666.

College invite

AN open day for potential students is being staged at South Staffordshire College this weekend.

All five campuses including Cannock, Lichfield and Rodbaston, will be open on Saturday, January 24, from 10am until 2pm.

Call 0300 456 2424.

Hundreds progress in paramedic jobs bid

A GROUP of 550 people have made it through the first round of recruitment to become one of 300 student paramedics with West Midlands Ambulance Service later this year.

The posts, which were advertised over the holiday season, will be filled within the next few weeks, with all 300 beginning their training by the summer.

There are two further stages of the selection process that candidates need to complete before they can be offered a job with the trust.

Recruitment adviser Louise Harris said: "We are delighted that so many people made it past the initial shortlisting. For some, the thought of going through over 1,000 applications might be daunting, but when you see the efforts that the candidates have gone to, filling in the applications and the enthusiasm they show, it is a rewarding process."

More than 1,000 applied for the posts. Service spokesman Steve Parry said: "The trust received its highest number of applications following an advertising campaign for new frontline staff across the region."

More than 20,000 people considered applying, looking at the job specification on NHS Jobs, which the service says is a 'staggering figure'.

The 30-month paid training course will lead to becoming a registered paramedic, and it is expected all 300 new staff will be working on the road by September.

Last year the trust recruited more than 280 paramedics, Mr Parry said, and it is likely the programme of recruiting more operational staff will continue later this year.

● West Midlands Fire Service has seen huge numbers applying for roles, with a recruitment drive ending last week. More than 3,600 people applied for 50 firefighter jobs with the service, and officials say they are staggered by the figures, which also revealed 5,917 people initially registered their interest in the positions.

A fire service spokesman said they are working through applications to see who did well enough to be invited to progress to the next stage, and hope to inform successful and non-successful applicants by the end of this month.

It comes as the service has lost 275 firefighters in the past four years as a result of £22 million cuts in funding.

Thousands could be hit by sheltered housing cuts

MORE than 4,200 residents will be hit by cuts to sheltered housing budgets across Staffordshire – with bosses warning charges could rise.

Funding for eight firms that provide the housing has already been cut by up to 50 per cent – and cash for all 15 organisations will cease in March.

The housing firms will have to pay for services to residents themselves – or find other ways to raise the money – such as increasing rents. Some 98 sheltered housing sites across Staffordshire are affected, including Grace Moor Court and Capstone Court in Cannock.

Among the firms affected are Bromford Housing, where 1,300 residents will see their support cut or drastically reduced.

The cuts are part of the council slashing its £11 million Supporting People funding by £6m, cash which is also used to fund community alarms and domestic violence support.

Risk

Final plans have not yet to be drawn up but options include reducing the service, increasing charges, or introducing a 'pay as you go' system.

It comes as the council looks to cut more than £100m over five years – with hundreds of jobs at risk.

Fears have been raised that residents will struggle to pay any extra fees.

Stafford councillor Maureen Compton said: "I cannot believe that the county council is proposing to hit the vulnerable and elderly with such a cut in its budget." But council bosses insist the cuts are 'likely to see most, if not all, sheltered housing schemes remain, thus reducing the need for people to consider moving to

Chill out and give your home a hug

SOUTH Staffs Water is reminding customers to give their home 'a hug' this winter.

Caroline Maddox, head of communications, said: "Plummeting temperatures can cause exposed pipework to freeze and in some cases burst.

"This is not just inconvenient – having cold water leak all over your home is expensive and can ruin treasured items.

"To help people prepare we are advising customers give their home a hug this winter. It is really quick and easy to do and could help save hundreds of pounds in repairing damage to flooring or furniture.

"By taking a few simple steps we can all help protect against the cold weather this winter – so go on, give your a home a hug."

South Staffs Water is advising customers to Check, Heat, Insulate, Locate and Lag their homes – or Chill for short.

Check you know where your stop tap is.Log on to www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/your_home/winter_emergencies.asp

Visitors enjoy traditional celebration

Lichfield Morris Men, from left, Stuart Davies of Lichfield, Dick Squire of Burntwood, and Peter Cole of Lichfield

IT is a tradition dating back hundreds of years to Anglo-Saxon times.

Around 150 people descended on the Wolseley Centre near Rugeley to take part in the annual Wassailing Ceremony staged by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

Wassailing is an ancient custom in which the evil spirits are driven out of trees and good spirits are encouraged to produce a bumper crop for the coming year. As well as performances from Beggars Oak Clog Dancers and Lichfield Morris Men, revellers were also invited to take part in the customs, including singing and dancing around the trees.

Wildlife trust spokesman James Wood said the event had been a massive success.

He said: "We were delighted with the turnout, with around 150 joining us and helping to keep one of our country's ancient customs alive.

"Both Beggars Oak Clog Dancers and Lichfield Morris Men put on a fantastic performance. This was just the first of a number of exciting wild events at the Wolseley Centre over the coming months."

During a traditional wassailing ceremony, a master of ceremonies known as The Butler paints his face in disguise and leads the festivities.

Mulled apple juice was also served up to visitors at the event.

Events in the next few weeks include a watercolour course on Thursday with artist Sue Chatterton.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Help is wanted to plant spring bulbs

AN appeal has gone out for help in planting more than 1,500 spring bulbs at a Staffordshire park this month.

Volunteers should meet at Chase Terrace Park this Saturday, January 24, from 11am to 1pm, for the planting.

The bluebell, snowdrop, daffodil and crocus bulbs have been bought with the help of a £200 donation from County Councillor Sue Woodward through the Staffordshire Local Community Fund.

Helpers should wear strong footwear and gardening gloves.

Service aims to ease loneliness

A SERVICE to 'break the silence of loneliness' has been launched.

Essingphone has been started by South Staffordshire Councillor David Clifft and co-ordinates a team of volunteers who take a few minutes out of their day to call lonely and elderly people in Essington and have a chat.

Those who know of someone who would like to receive a regular call should contact Councillor Clifft on 07930 394399 or via his Facebook page.

Woman injured in M6 collision

A WOMAN was taken to hospital with a back injury after an HGV collided with a car on the M6.

The crash happened on the northbound carriageway between junction 10a, for Essington, and junction 11, for Cannock, at 6.20am on Thursday.

A woman, in her 50s, who was in the car, was taken to New Cross Hospital after complaining of a back injury.

Cosford reopens after big clean-up

RAF Cosford Museum has reopened after specially trained cleaners gave exhibits their annual tidy-up.

Workers from Staffordshire's Total Access armed with dusters, brooms and mops spent a week cleaning the National Cold War Exhibition. They were suspended from ropes and harnesses to get to the suspended exhibits.

Plea on break-in

A CHILD'S bike, scooter and laptop were among items stolen in a break-in. Burglars broke into a home in Moreton Street, Chadsmoor, by forcing a window. Anyone with information can call 101.

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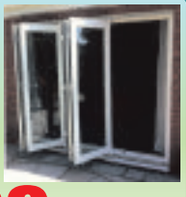

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews

A SIGN on the door to our print works bears the warning that 'ear protection must be worn when the presses are running'.

Always one to comply with such rulings, I diligently looked through the window, saw that the presses were idle and that the hall was empty, apart from a man with a broom. Deciding that ear protection was not necessary, I ventured into the room where country and western music was playing. Definitely an earplugs day.

□□□□□

LOOK, I confess I am not a regular bus traveller. I occasionally hop onto one after a night out in town, or on the way back from the garage when I drop the car in for a service, but there are plenty of people better qualified to comment on their merits than myself.

But when I heard National Express's justification for hiking up its fares at a time of falling fuel prices, my jaw dropped.

Normally, they blame rising fuel costs when they put the fares up, but this year, faced with a 20 per cent fall in the cost of diesel, they have had to try a different tack. So this year the 4.8 per cent increase is justified by the fact that the company is investing in some shiny new buses to make for a more pleasant passenger experience. Drivers will also be getting some smart uniforms to add to the feeling of wellbeing.

But really, who actually gets onto a bus for the enjoyment of it? Even in the days of the much-maligned Banga buses, I don't suppose anybody saw one arrive at the bus stop and think, 'you know what, I'll wait another 20 minutes in case the next one has plusher upholstery?'

Whenever I board a bus, the main considerations are where it goes from, where it goes to, how long I will have to wait, and how quickly it will get me back. And yes, how much it costs. Because when it is £2.20 to go a couple of miles, and there's a group of you, a taxi suddenly sounds much better value.

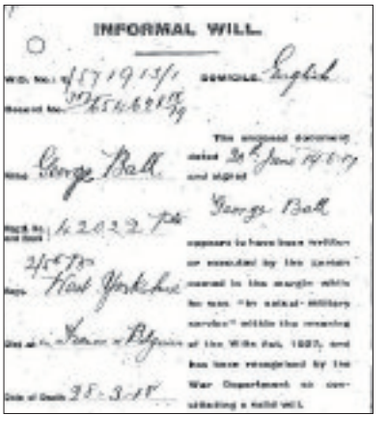
It's the same with the shiny new bus station in Wolverhampton. Yes, it is clean bright and modern, far more attractive than the old, cramped affair. But the thing about the scruffy old bus station was you could just turn up, and get a bus to just about anywhere you were likely to want to go. Now you rock up, fiddle about with the exciting new touch screen, and it tells you that the bus you want only picks up passengers from the other side of town.

Yes, it is important that our buses are safe and reliable. Nobody wants to see a fleet of old heaps that keep breaking down, but given the big fall in fuel costs, it is surely possible to maintain a safe, reliable bus service without resorting to an inflation-busting fare increase.

A cheap, cheerful, reliable and convenient service is all that most people require.

Private Benjamin Coley left all to his father

Private George Ball – buried at Bienvilliers



Close-up of an informal will

Last wish of men who fell in battle

How brave soldiers made sure their loved ones would inherit all they had, DANIEL WAINWRIGHT explains

THEY are the last wishes of men who gave their lives in service to their country.

Black Country and Staffordshire soldiers ensured their loved ones would inherit all they had after they fell in battle in the Great War.

The wills of servicemen who made the ultimate sacrifice are simple affairs. Three show how each soldier bequeathed all they owned either to parents or a spouse in just one sentence.

The wills form part of a unique UK archive of 278,000 digitised First World War documents.

They have been preserved, scanned and placed online by records management company Iron Mountain and HM Courts & Tribunals Service as part of a modernisation programme and to mark the centenary of the start of the Great War.

Valid

The wills, which were carried around by soldiers at all times in a pocket book tucked into their uniform, represent the soldier's last ever personally-written record. More than one million searches for individual wills have already been made since the archive went live last year.

The 'informal will' documents declare that 'the enclosed document appears to have been written or executed by the person named in the margin while he was 'in actual military service' within the meaning of the Wills Act, 1837, and has been recognised by the War Department as constituting a valid will."

Norman Joseph Brindley was born in Wolverhampton in 1898, the son of Henry Joseph and Mary Ann Brindley (nee Neale).

He had a brother, Herbert Henry, born in 1890 but who died a few months later. According to the 1901 census he lived with his parents at 118 Dudley Road in Blakenhall and the family lived in Cherry Street by the time of his death.

Norman was a Rifleman with the 8th City of London Battalion, Post Office Rifles, and died on April 29 1918 aged just 20.

His will states he 'died at France' and that he left 'the whole of my property and effects' to his father.

Private George Ball from Hednesford wanted to take care of his wife, Gertrude. Serving with the 2nd/5th Battalion, Prince of Wales's Own (West Yorkshire Regiment), he was killed in action on March 28, 1918 at the age of 28.

His will gives the location of his death as 'France or Belgium' but he is buried in Bienvilliers Military Cemetery in Pas de Calais, France.

He lived with Gertrude in Littleworth Tileries, Hednesford. He was killed barely nine months after making his will. His simple will states: "In the event of my death I leave all to my wife Mrs George Ball," followed by their address.

Benjamin Coley's will states his death was on July 1 1916. But instead of a location, all that is recorded for his whereabouts is 'killed in action'.

The 23-year-old from Aldridge Road, Walsall Wood, served as a Private with the 1st Battalion, South Staffordshire Regiment.

His handwritten will states: "In the event of my death I give the whole of my property and effects to my father Mr Benjamin Coley, The Vigo, Walsall Wood, near Walsall."

Important

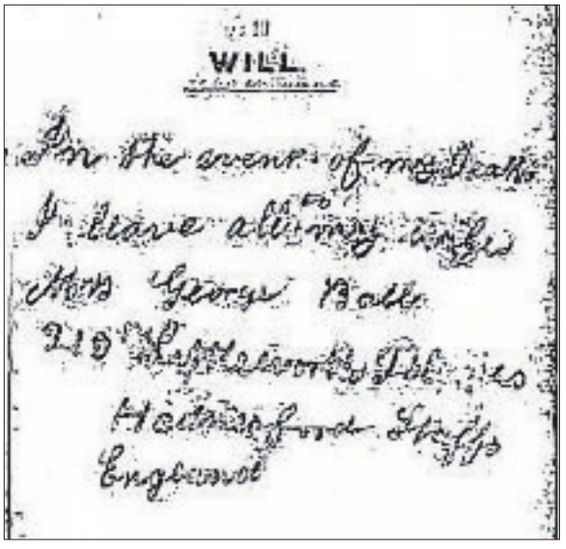
Pte Coley was buried at Thiepval Memorial in the Somme, France.

Last year marked the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War. Courts minister Shailesh Vara said: "It is important to remember those who laid down their lives for this country. By working with Iron Mountain to make this treasure trove of documents easily accessible online, HM Courts & Tribunals Service is preserving the memories of our fallen soldiers.

"This will be an invaluable tool for historians, genealogists and anyone who wants to add detail to their family tree.

"It is a great example of the Government working innovatively to provide a modern and efficient public service."

Scanned copies of wills are available for £10 from www.gov.uk/wills-probate-inheritance/searching-for-probate-records.



Private George Ball left everything to his wife

WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

THE words 'long-term economic plan' are still ringing through the streets of the West Midlands. Well, maybe that's a bit of an exaggeration. But they're certainly reverberating around the hotel on the South Staffordshire and Cannock border where George Osborne addressed a group of pensioners this week.

The Chancellor went table to table discussing his new pensioner bonds. Don't worry, that's not some later life version of Fifty Shades of Grey. Rather it's a way of giving savers something to offset the impact of low interest rates, which are helping people with mortgages but not doing a fat lot for those trying to build a nest egg.

The four aforementioned words are central to everything the Chancellor is campaigning on over the next few months.

"Stick with me and I'll make the country wealthy," he's effectively saying. Give the Treasury to the other lot and they'll undo all the good work."

Explain

It's really going to be a question as to how worth it the various upturns in the economy have been. If the cuts imposed since 2010 haven't been worth it then Mr Osborne's long-term economic plan is going to become an opposition pipe dream.

We're going to see him again before the election. He wants to set out a long-term economic plan for the Midlands as well.

Hopefully this will explain what we're actually meant to do with the Birmingham and Black Country Combined Authority that council leaders signed up to recently.

There has been a lot of talk about a so-called northern powerhouse. And Mr Osborne is adamant he wants a rebalanced economy that does not rely as heavily as previously on the City of London.

If the north is the powerhouse, the Midlands cannot just be the passed over middle child, a sort of unappetising stale jam inside the doughnut that would be the rest of England.

We will see George Osborne again. It's about time we found out what exactly is on the table in terms of devolved powers.

No employer should be able to get away without paying their workers at least the National Minimum Wage.

But I do have to wonder if a 'naming and shaming' policy by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills is really helpful.

All the ones in the West Midlands on the past two lists told of either 'genuine mistakes' or disputes with staff over their attendance.

It's very easy to say 'well they would say that'. But in one case a hairdresser in Walsall, with 15 years experience, was so upset that it's made her wonder whether or not she wants to take on trainees again.

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Gangsters claim on drug find in storage premises

A COMPANY boss and friend of murdered Staffordshire businessman Richard Deakin claimed he was coerced by ruthless gangsters into letting his Cannock premises be used for a cannabis factory, a court heard.

Landscaper Dwaine Williams said he was too scared to go to the police after being approached by the gang, Stafford Crown Court heard.

The court was told that a cannabis operation was discovered in Williams's rented storage facility after a fire on the Birch Business Park in Cannock.

There were 75 plants under cultivation, some of which had already been harvested, with a crop worth more than £33,000 on the street.

Financial

Williams, aged 29, of Newport Road, Hinstock, admitted permitting premises to be used for the production of cannabis.

In a basis of plea, Williams said he had no involvement with the cannabis, nor had any financial reward.

Giving evidence to back up his plea, he said he had been Mr Deakin's 'best friend' and attended the trial of those accused of his murder.

He said: "After that case I got approached by some members of the family (of a defendant). They told me they were putting this in my building – and that was it. I had no other option than to let them carry on.

"With these people, there's no 'yes' or 'no', you just have to do what they say.

"If I said 'no', they could have done something to my mum or family."

When Miss Wendy Miller, prosecuting, asked him "Who's this gang?", he replied: "Anslow's." Asked if he had received any threats, he said: "Yes, I got told I would be dealt with – the exact words. If I went to the police they would find out, so I would be dealt with anyway."

Richard Deakin, who died after being shot at his home

John Anslow was cleared of organising Mr Deakin's murder

The court heard that from November 2013, Williams was paying £519 a month to rent the premises to store the tools and materials for his landscaping business, Staffordshire Paving Company.

On April 6, there was a fire at the business park which set off the alarm at his stores and he was called to the site to unlock it.

It led to police discovering the cannabis factory at the rear.

Williams was released on bail for a pre-sentence report to be prepared, with a date yet to be fixed for his sentencing.

Judge Mark Eades said it was a typical drug producers' set-up and called it a 'front masquerading as a legitimate business and the rear used for production of cannabis'.

John Anslow, who was once one of the country's most wanted criminals after being sprung from a prison van, was cleared of organising the 2010 murder of Mr Deakin, who was blasted to death as he slept at his home in Chasetown.

Anslow was jailed for seven years for escaping prison and 22 years for a drugs conspiracy.

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Target those who caused the deficit

I DISAGREE with Grahame Wiggin (Letters, January 8).

Unlike Grahame and his party, I believe those who are to blame for the deficit should be made to pay their fair share, and I don't think readers will find what I am saying boring!

CLLR PAUL WITTON
Cannock

We're grateful for donations

WE would like to thank everyone who visited our Christmas lights at 8 Squirrel Close, Huntington.

The total raised for the Midlands Air Ambulance charity was £1429.64p.

PAUL & JANE CARPENTER

Counting on MPs to attend

BEFORE we comment on MPs' salaries and expenses I invite everyone to watch BBC Parliament Live.

I have never counted more than 30 in attendance.

DAVID ALAN BIRT
Cannock

Visit to unit would show what is at stake

YET again Staffordshire County Council are taking away from the people of Great Wyrley and surrounding areas.

A respite unit that has everything for people who are disabled, people with varying stages of dementia and disabled care and for people with learning difficulties catering for ages 18 to 100-plus. A unit that has met the standards of the Care Quality Commission to a high level for the last five years.

Staffordshire County Council have said that 'beds are not being used' but have refrained from saying that social services have stopped referring people, as friends who are also disabled have tried to use the service and were told to use elsewhere, which means travelling away from outside their locality. It has also been alleged that Landywood Voluntary Help is to be closed. These will make three excellent facilities being taken away from Great Wyrley as the Day Centre has already been closed.

Mr Alan White, cabinet chief for health care and wellbeing, intimates that GreatWyrley Community Support Unit does not offer 'high quality' personalised services. Well I have been lucky enough to have received respite care at Great Wyrley CSU over a number of years and could not have received better care anywhere else. Perhaps Mr White would find the time to visit Great Wyrley CSU to see for himself what the council are proposing to take away from us.

WENDA BORLEY
Great Wyrley

It is vital we recall horrors of the past

ON Holocaust Memorial Day – January 27, 2015 – hundreds of thousands of people will gather at over 2,400 events across the country to mark 70 years since the liberation of the Nazi's most notorious killing site Auschwitz-Birkenau.

These events will allow people to come together to remember and honour the millions killed in the Holocaust and in subsequent genocides.

Candles designed by award-winning sculptor Sir Anish Kapoor will be lit at 70 special commemorations around the UK and at Auschwitz itself, symbolically linking them on this important anniversary.

It is vital that we all remember and reflect upon the horrors of the past, and honour those who survived. Play your part by attending a local event – listed at hmd.org.uk – or reading a survivor story on keepthememoryalive.hmd.org.uk and sharing it with others.

OLIVIA MARKS-WOLDMAN
Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Cannock Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

E-MAIL
cannock.chron@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Let justice be response

I AM deeply saddened by the tragic deaths in Paris. The Islamic fundamentalists want nothing more than to create fear, panic and chaos. Let us be clear that is their aim and goal. So I would request that all non-Muslim readers who may be thinking negatively about Muslims, please don't let those crazed fanatics take your hearts. Swift action and justice yes, but hate-filled revenge attacks, absolutely no.

MARK D
Cannock

Hospital move is mistake

IT is agreed by everyone that accident and emergency services nationwide are under severe pressure and everything possible is being done by all concerned to tackle the causes.

However, as one of the ageing population living in the area covered by Stafford Hospital and using its services, I have to say that a grave mistake is being made now and for the future, if this hospital is downgraded.

All the surrounding hospitals are under intense pressure. Vast sums of money, much time and effort are being expended by all the relevant authorities .

I cannot help thinking that if a fraction of it all could be devoted to restoring and maintaining services at Stafford the situation would be much better in all the surrounding hospitals. In my opinion, little thought has been given to patients, relatives and friends both now and in the future.

E TURVEY
Penkridge

Thank you Julia for helping our charity

I WOULD like to thank Julia Challinor, the manager of One Stop convenience store in Rosehill, Hednesford, and all her staff for holding a Christmas raffle and donating the proceeds of £430.57p to the charity I help to run.

Our charity is called L.A.R.F. (life after rehab friends). The charity was formed from ex-patients that had attended the Neurological Day Unit in Cannock Hospital. The aim is to maintain the support structure. Conditions such as stroke, multiple sclerosis, and many other neurological problems are treated at the unit. I myself was a patient with a rare condition called Guillen Barre Syndrome. As we are a very small charity, any donations we are very grateful for. Julia learned of our charity as she was my manager when I worked for One Stop, Sharon Way, Hednesford.

RITA SMITH
Hednesford

Which of the political claims do we believe?

FOR the next 100 days or so, we will all be subjected to party political claims and counter claims, many of which will be unsubstantiated, in an attempt to solicit our vote.

Which, if any, of these claims should or can we believe? However, the general public are not in a position to be able to verify the vast majority of them, while the media invariably simply report/broadcast what they say.

How then are we expected to make a 'well considered decision' given that most of these statements accuse the other of falsehoods and untruths? Is it any wonder that the public at large have totally lost faith/interest with politics?

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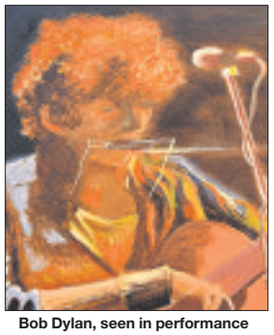
Stars light up display of teacher's new artwork

PORTRAITS of stars from Sting to Judi Dench have gone on show as part of a new exhibition.

Burntwood artist Richard Griffin is showcasing his work at Chasewater Innovation Centre with individual works ranging from rock stars to landscapes.

The 63-year-old private music teacher has been painting since he was a teenager but has dedicated more time to his passion since leaving his job as a school music teacher in 2006.

Mr Griffin, from Squirrels Hollow, said: "We had art classes in school and I have dabbled with painting since I was in my teens. I am mainly self-taught and I take inspiration from pictures in books or magazines. I enjoy painting landscapes, trees, lakes and mountains." It is Mr Griffin's second exhibition, having previously displayed his work at Waitrose in Lichfield.



Bob Dylan, seen in performance

Beaumaris Castle in Anglesey

Richard Griffin, who is exhibiting his work at the Chasewater Centre

Unusual

The grandfather of four added: "I paint mostly in oil but I like to try out different techniques including watercolours and using a knife on oil paintings, too. Some of my paintings are not so realistic, they are more bold and colourful.

"I paint in four or five different styles and I think the variety of paintings makes my exhibition a little unusual."

Mr Griffin said his love of music has inspired a number of the artworks in the collection. He said: "I enjoy painting famous musicians and faces that people will recognise from the 1960s to the present dayI am a big fan of Bob Dylan, I have painted more than one picture of him.

"The image showing him playing the guitar was inspired by a concert I saw on the TV. I paused the screen so I could take a picture and then painted it the size of the TV screen. The colours in this painting are based on the shine from the lights and glow from the stage.

"Some pieces I still consider to be unfinished. Some of my paintings I may go back to years later.

"One of my landscape pictures is based on Lake Garda in Italy. The scene is real but the colours are fantasy. I don't always paint exactly as it looks. The castle on a snowy background is based on Beaumaris Castle in Anglesey, looking out past the castle towards Snowdonia."

The free exhibition is running until Saturday and all paintings on display are for sale, with prices ranging from £50 to £500. For more information, call 01543 370737.

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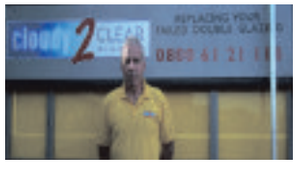
It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. 'Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole.'

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. 'The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated.'

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on **0800 61 21 118** and he'll be happy to help!



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Business lounge opens

A new business lounge to help professionals on the go has been opened in Staffordshire.

The fully equipped office is located at the Roadchef in Betty's Lane, Norton Canes, off the M6 Toll between junctions 6 and 7. The stop-off is one of the UK's newest motorway service stations.

The 'office' has been launched by business enterprise firm Regus Express, which specialises in business lounges and meeting rooms for working people at motorway services, retail centres, railway stations and airport lounges.

£20k is put to good use in latest business

CANNOCK businessman Matthew Flint has launched what he claims is the world's first online marketplace for reclaimed, salvaged, upcycled and antique goods.

With the help of £20,000 of private investment he hopes to have the business flying high before the year is out.

The Reclamation Shop officially launched in the UK and Ireland in the autumn of 2014, just as the public's interest in reusing and 'repurposing' household items hit the peak of popularity with TV shows like Kirstie's Fill Your House For Free.

As well as being well received by the public Mr Flint's new website has also enjoyed a business boost thanks to Dragons' Den star Theo Paphitis, who named it his Small Business Sunday winner in September and tweeted about The Reclamation Shop to his 437,000 Twitter followers.

Matthew Flint – 'thrilled'

Attracted

Cannock-based Mr Flint will be meeting Mr Paphitis on Thursday next week as part of a Small Business Sunday winners gathering.

The website allows users to view and buy items from some of the largest and most well-established reclamation, salvage and antique yards in the country and locate 'hidden gems' before even leaving their home.

Mr Flint said: "I am thrilled with the recent investment that The Reclamation Shop has attracted.

"The Reclamation Shop is potentially a £20,000,000 turnover business in the UK alone and our forecasted growth should see us well within six-figure profits in just under four years, although this business is definitely a labour of love, it's not just about the money.

"My wife, Adele, has an upcycling business of her own and it was her frustration with trying to hunt out a hidden treasure that led to the foundation of The Reclamation Shop.

"We have already attracted a fantastic variety of stockists."

He has founded and grown three other businesses in his 12 years in business and he believes that the renaissance of all things 'pre-loved' will see his most recent venture become equally successful.

As well as The Reclamation Shop, his portfolio includes IMF Marketing Group, Yogurt Top Marketing, PReach PR, all of which are undergoing a recruitment drive. Visit www.thereclamationshop.co.uk

Housing boss is delighted over company results

THE director in charge of Persimmon Homes West Midlands says he is delighted with the company's most recent results – and says his team is gearing up to deliver even more in 2015.

Tim Brickley said the strong performance in 2014 was a real team effort.

"Nationally there was an increase of 17 per cent in legal completions in 2014 to 13,509.

"This is compared to 11,528 in 2013," he said.

"Our average selling price rose five per cent from £180,941 to £190,500 and our full year revenues increased 23 per cent over 2013 to £2.6 billion.

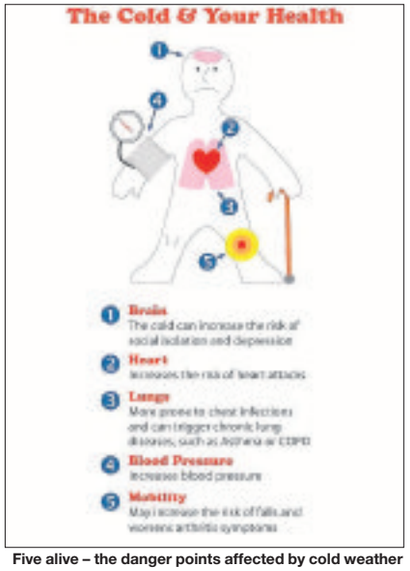
"Our focus is now on continuing to deliver new homes into the communities where they are most needed."

Persimmon Homes West Midlands has a number of new sites planned for launch this year including Hednesford and Great Haywood.

"We have new developments launching throughout 2015 and will be working closely with local authorities to ensure planning issues don't slow the pathway to delivering new communities," Mr Brickley added.

To find out more information, visit www.persimmonhomes.com.

Advisers look out for chilly homes



Five alive – the danger points affected by cold weather

BEAT the Cold, an independent not-for-profit agency based in Staffordshire, aims to visit more than 200 homes before the end of the winter and help residents if their cold homes make them ill. When a vulnerable person is cold at home, they put their health at risk.

Last year, in the Cannock Chase district, there were 20 excess winter deaths and 4,411 households lived in fuel poverty – one in nine households in the district. The health of many people was affected – from heart attacks to breathing problems, from depression to accidental falls.

To help get the message across a graphic was produced by final year medical students from Keele University, who summed up the effects of the cold with a simple drawing of a poorly man, aptly named Luke Warm.

Beat the Cold hotline: 0800 043 2815 or 01782 683813.

Stab threat to friend of partner as he sat in car

A JEALOUS Cannock man who threatened to stab his partner's friend has been given a suspended jail sentence.

By Paul Davenport

Drunken Christopher Murdoch climbed out of the window of his girlfriend's house and ran towards Luc Hill waving a kitchen knife around, Stafford Crown Court heard.

Mr Hill was sitting in his car and Murdoch prodded the knife at the vehicle. Just beforehand, the defendant had told his girlfriend, Loren Harrison: 'Watch this, I'm going to stab him'.

Murdoch, aged 21, of Brunswick Road, admitted possessing a knife in a public place. He was given an eight-month prison sentence suspended for two years, ordered to do 100 hours unpaid community work and pay £600 costs.

Recorder Mr Simon Ward told him: "On August 31, you behaved in a very frightening way, you were drunk, angry and jealous. You were at home at the time – you weren't carrying a knife around with you."

Miss Fiona Cortese, prosecuting, said Miss Harrison and Mr Hill were just friends and had never been in a relationship.

On the day in question, Mr Hill had seen her and the defendant in Silks nightclub in Cannock. After they left, she sent Mr Hill a text message and he drove round to her home. He knocked on the door, but it was locked, and there was shouting inside. Mr Hill told the defendant to come outside.

Mr Delroy Henry, defending, said: "This was absolutely disgraceful intimidatory behaviour.

"The fact he was in drink is more an explanation rather than an excuse."

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DogsTrust

Festival shows loyalty to local beers

Brian Pretty, seated, Duncan Rippon, Fuzz Weir, Scott Hollingsworth, Lynne Tyler, Mark Jones *Picture: Robert Yardley*

THE Lichfield Winter Beer Festival is being held tomorrow and Saturday at the city's Guildhall.

It will feature more than 30 real ales, most of them sourced from local and regional breweries, plus a range of traditional cider and perry as well as specialist bottled beers.

Among the beers are Twickenham Brewery's Naked Ladies and Grandstand Bitter plus Weal Ales' Fixed Wheel Mosaic besides regular favourites Dark Raven, The Hoard, Palmers Poison and Staffie.

In addition, there will be a choice of wines, fine quality food plus the infamous but now Famous Pork Pies, and a wide range of soft drinks for drivers.

Radio Mary will be on stage tomorrow, playing a 'contagious music cocktail of covers and frantic celtic music'.

On Saturday the aptly named local band Last Orders will play their mix of covers from punk to blues. The festival is open each day from midday to 11pm. Admission is £2 before 6pm and £3 afterwards.

Lichfield Arts president Brian Pretty said: "These festivals are great community events, enjoyed by all, attracting many much needed visitors to the city, which boosts the local economy."

Further information and tickets are obtainable at www.lichfieldarts.org.uk or on 01543 262223.

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YOUR LOCAL FAMILY LAW SPECIALISTS

Firm brews up for year of growth with ale boost

NOT so long ago, real ale was associated with middle-aged men, drinking in smoky, badly lit pubs.

But now it has surged in popularity as a whole new generation seeks an alternative to mass-produced lager.

New micro breweries are popping up across the country, and the industry is thriving in the West Midlandas and Staffordshire in particular. In Brownhills, business is booming for the Backyard Brewhouse – with bosses set to open a new bar in the town in the coming months.

The location has not been revealed yet, but the bar – specialising in craft beers – would be based in a former shop unit and would only have space for around 50 customers.

Director Austen Morgan, who runs the firm with Mike Bates, says it would be like a 'snug' in the corner of an old-fashioned pub, with a warm atmosphere. And it will mainly sell craft beers, which are made without using filters or being pasteurised – leaving them cloudy and with a heavier taste.

Backyard director Mike Bates has big plans for the coming year

Increased

Mr Morgan says it shows the way the sector is growing that a brewery like his now has the confidence to open a new bar like this, which a few years ago would have been seen as catering for a niche market.

And with 31 pubs reported to be closing across the country each week, he admits it is a difficult time for the industry.

But the brewery is continuing to grow, and has increased production 60 per cent every 12 months since launching in 2008.

That rapid expansion has slowed slightly now, but Mr Morgan expects to see a 20 per cent increase over the next year. It produced 46 barrels, or 11,031 pints, over the last year – up from 40 barrels the year before.

And the firm has ambitious plans for the future, with the new craft beer bar the next step in the journey to opening a chain of businesses across the West Midlands.

It already runs The Fountain in Lower Forster Street, Walsall, and hopes to open another five or six over the next four years.

The growing demand for real ale has seen Black Country Ales open 25 pubs, and the Backyard Brewhouse is building up a similar reputation among enthusiasts, while also attracting people who are trying ale for the first time.

Mr Morgan said: "It's always difficult to tell how things will go when you start a business like this but we are delighted so far. When we set it up we started out with the goal of really growing but we went into it not knowing where we were going to end up.

"We are pretty much on track now but we are going to keep going. I think the main target now is to secure volume at the brewery through acquiring an estate of pubs and craft bars."

The brewery at the Gatehouse Trading Estate in Brownhills had a £250,000 revamp three years ago with new equipment and offices.

Mr Morgan said: "These are exciting times and we are confident about what we can achieve."

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Take a look at
Chadsmoor

Chadsmoor and High Town to the north-east of Cannock represent the late-19th-and 20th-century expansion of the town as a mining area.

They now form an almost continuously built-up area joining Cannock to Hednesford. Much of West Chadsmoor consists of council and other housing dating from between the two World Wars and later.

As well as its popular row of niche village shops, Chadsmoor is a popular place for eating out with a number of Indian takeaways within a short distance.

It has a distinctive church history with a school-church being opened in 1874, with transepts and a small chancel being added in 1876. The foundation stone of the present church of St Chad was laid at Easter 1891 'in the presence of a large company of miners and their families', and the church was consecrated in 1892. It is built of machine-made red brick and consists of nave, chancel, south porch, vestry, and organ chamber. Stained glass was inserted in the east window in 1908 in memory of Tabitha Benton. There is one bell in a turret at the north-west corner of the church.

The small wooden church of St Aidan in Pye Green Road, West Chadsmoor, was in use from 1947 to 1956 when it was converted into a church hall. It had one bell. The present church, begun in 1955 on a nearby site on the opposite side of the road, was opened in 1956, the architects being Wood, Goldstraw, and Yorath of Stoke on Trent. Built of light-brown brick, the church consists of a wide nave, a shallow chancel, a south vestry, and a north porch, and has one bell.

A Primitive Methodist chapel was built at Chadsmoor in 1876 and was replaced in 1911 by a new chapel built in front of it. By 1956, the former chapel was being used as a Sunday school and also as a day school. The present chapel, of red brick with stone Gothic windows and doorways, was designed by Jeffries and Shipley.

There is one Baptist chapel, built in Arthur Street, in 1905 at a cost of £1,000. It replaced an earlier Baptist chapel, which stands behind it and was built in 1879. This former chapel was used as a Sunday school and as an overflow for Chadsmoor Central Boys' School. The present chapel is of red brick with stone dressings and leaded windows. It has seating accommodation for 250.

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Boss highlights success of apprentice schemes

Mike on competition trail

Hendesford karate instructor Mike Carr has been studying karate for 23 years and has competed across the country and the world

HENDESFORD karate instructor Mike Carr is taking part in a competition in Paris this weekend.

It will be the first competition this year for Mike, who has been studying karate for 23 years and has competed across the country and the world.

He also runs a children's karate class at Cannock's Avon Road leisure centre and a class for adults in Stafford at Gym & Tonic.

As well as Paris, the World Karate Federation Premier League will see the world's best compete against each other in Amsterdam, Sao Paulo, Egypt, Salzburg, Germany, Japan and Turkey.

The Team GB squad for the European Games in Baku, Azjerbajan, will be decided this year, and Mike hopes to secure a place.

Mike is sponsored by local health company Nuffield Health and has also secured a 12-month sponsorship deal with Adidas.

A BUSINESS chief has hailed the importance of apprentices after it emerged that the number in Staffordshire has doubled over the last four years.

More than 8,300 young people started an apprenticeship in 2013-14, latest figures show, with almost 3,000 of these aged 16 to 18. The county council's apprenticeship scheme saw more than 600 apprentices taken on since it was launched in 2009.

The council's highways contractor Amey currently has three apprentices in their second year of a programme. Steve Jones, Amey account director, said: "We are committed to helping young people develop careers through our apprentice programme.

"It is important that, as a sector, we continue to invest in the future generation.

"Securing apprenticeships and work experience for care leavers in Staffordshire means we are able to provide opportunities for young people who have often had a difficult start in life."

Argued

Meanwhile, Cannock Chase Chamber of Commerce has called for the Government to speed up changes to the way apprenticeships are funded as the wait is creating uncertainty among firms. A consultation is being held over a possible new system.

Chamber director Chris Plant said: "We have long argued that businesses want a bigger say over how training funds are spent, but not all companies are ready to take full control over apprenticeship funding. Ministers have listened and recognised that different companies have different needs. It is now important for them to clarify how apprenticeship funding will work."

In a separate development, Universities and Science Minister Nicholas Boles has said HS2 is an example of how the Government is creating apprenticeships in the West Midlands. He said more than 2,000 places would be made available.

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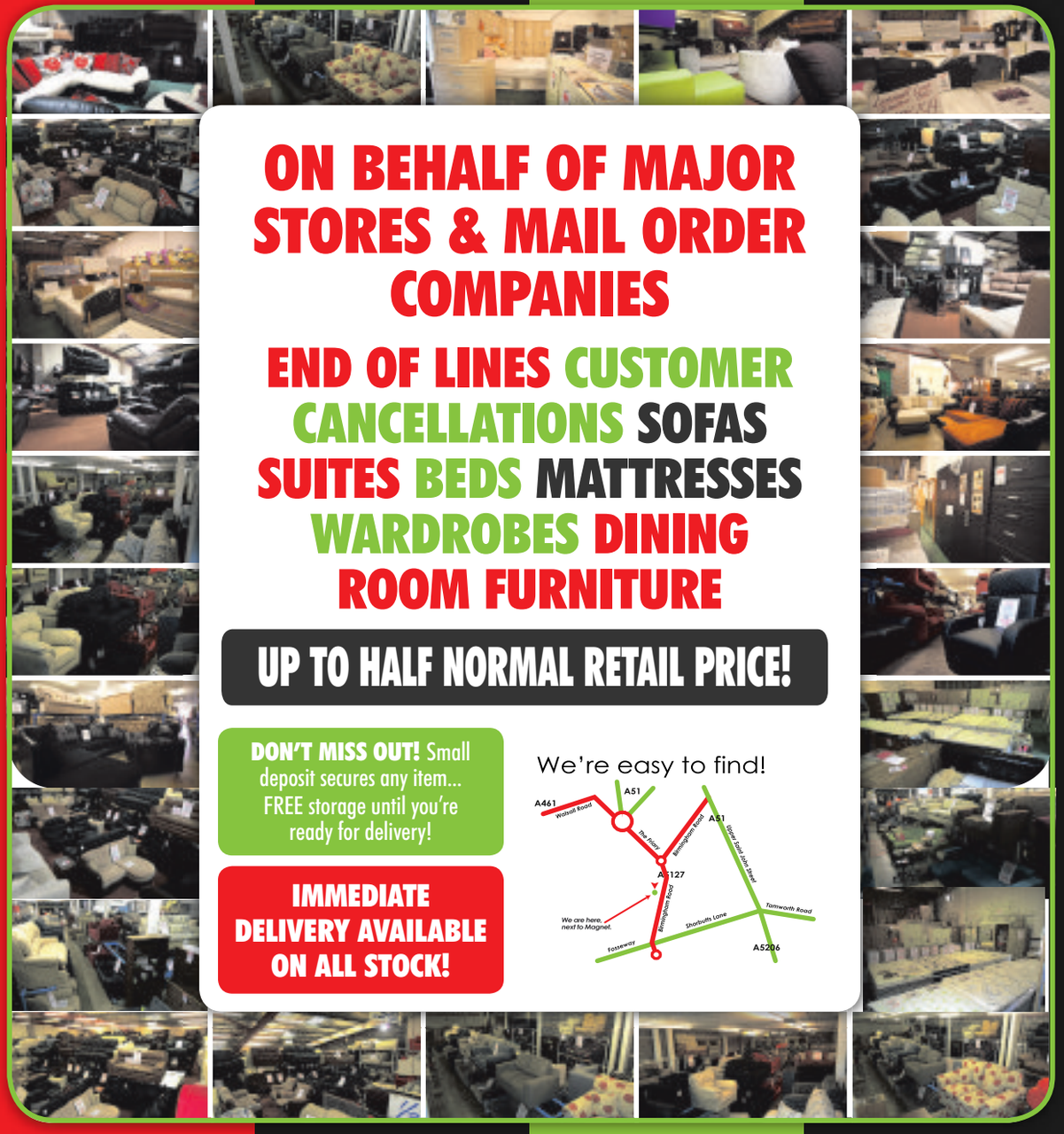

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Road backed at display

A NEW link road between the M54 and M6 Toll received the backing of visitors to a public consultation, which was attended by 100 people. The Highways Agency's exhibition at Cheslyn Hay Village Hall presented three options, two of which involved building a new road between junction one of the M54 and junction eight of the M6, while the third was to create a slip road to let cars go north from the M54 at junction 10A. Mike Boyle, chairman of Cheslyn Hay Parish Council, said all the visitors backed the first two options. South Staffs Council has backed the third option.

Parents are reminded to make most of childcare

PARENTS across Staffordshire are being reminded about the opportunity to access free, high-quality childcare which allows them to retrain and get back into work.

The rallying call comes on the back of a survey by the family charity 4Children which suggests that one in five UK parents paying for childcare will reduce the hours they work or consider giving up work altogether in 2015 because of childcare costs.

By Simon Stone

Thousands of Staffordshire's two-year-olds are already accessing free high-quality childcare but Staffordshire County Council's cabinet lead for children Councillor Mike Lawrence wants to see even more parents and their tots benefiting from the free places.

He said the county council had introduced its Think2 scheme to give children the opportunity to get the best possible start in life and to help parents interested in returning to work or retraining.

Time

The scheme, which provides 15 hours free childcare per week during term time, has now been extended to parents who receive Working Tax Credits and whose household income is below £16,190. Councillor Lawrence added: "We have been incredibly pleased with the success of our scheme so far."

Tim Webster is one Staffordshire dad who is benefiting from the scheme. Tim's two-year old son Alfie spends 15 hours a week with childminder Wendy Douglas while Tim puts his free time to good use at university studying for a Masters Degree in Education.

Tim said: "The Think2 scheme has been really great for me and Alfie and has not only given me some extra time to study, but it is also perfect for Alfie who's now getting to mix with other children his age."

Staffordshire has seen significant improvements in the quality of childcare, with around 84per cent of the county's providers now rated as either good or outstanding.

The free childcare is provided by local nurseries, childminders or pre-schools and is available across the county. Anyone meeting the benefits criteria for free school meal eligibility also qualify, and being on the scheme does not affect people's benefits.

Parents can check if they are eligible and apply at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/think2 or call 0300 111 8007. The 4Children survey of 1,000 parents paying for childcare can be found at www.4children.org.uk

Good and outstanding childcare providers in Staffordshire include: South Staffordshire, 10 registered as outstanding and 47 as good (87%), Cannock five registered as outstanding and 40 as good (72%), Lichfield, 18 registered as outstanding and 32 good (88%).

Training boost as foster service in £4m scheme

THE fostering service in Staffordshire is taking part in the £4 million pilot programme which has seen nearly 50 foster carers and social workers trained in new ways to look after children in care.

The programme is led by the Fostering Network in partnership with Jacaranda Development and ThemPra Social Pedagogy, and will be evaluated by a team led by the Centre for Child and Family Research at Loughborough University.

Staffordshire County Council's children's service boss councillor Mike Lawrence said: "The programme has allowed foster carers to empower young people and create an environment in which they can thrive. Many foster carers involved in the programme have described the profound impact it has had on them.

"We now want to build on the success of this programme, train more foster carers in this new way of caring for children, help young people improve their day-to-day life and ensure they fulfil their potential."

Minister for Children and Families Edward Timpson, who grew up with more than 80 fostered brothers and sisters, said: "Foster carers make an invaluable difference.

Guest tells of Walking Severn Way

Burntwood WI

PRESIDENT Gwyneth welcomed all and wished everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Unfortunately she had sad news concerning two members who had lost family members before Christmas and one of the club's own members had passed away.

There was some good news about two members who were both home and improving after treatments in hospital.

Minutes of the Christmas meeting were read and feedback asked regarding the catering and entertainment.

The raffle from the evening which amounted to £125 was sent to the Daisy Garland charity.

The trip to Oxford and Waddesdon Manor in November was a wonderful day out, thanks were given to Sandie for organising it.

A Beetle Drive takes place in February at Hammerwich Cricket Club.

Speaker for the evening was Paul Watts, who had visited last year as a magician but this time he came to tell of his journey Walking the Severn Way. The walk is 210 miles long and Paul did it in 29 stages, returning home or camping after each stage.

Paul had many tales to tell and showed some fabulous slides of the flora and fauna and also the towns he called at. Thanks were given by Judy Griffiths.

Wendy Dunn won the party hat competition and after the raffle Ron Box closed the meeting with Thought for the Month.

Funding helps group to support charities

Hayley Cliff, Councillor Alison Spicer, Janis Lomas and Dickie James, of Women's Aid

SI Cannock & District

THE two main charities being supported during SI Cannock & District's Diamond Anniversary year are the Pathway Project and Staffordshire Women's Aid.

Both organisations provide support and refuges for women victims of domestic violence and their children and the club recently made an application for a grant to County Councillor Alison Spicer, through her Staffordshire Local Community Fund. Members were delighted when it was successful.

A grant of £1,000 has enabled them to present cheques for £50 to each organisation to enable mothers and children to have much needed days out together. SI Cannock & District president Janis Lomas thanked Councillor Spicer for approving the grant. Councillor Spicer said she was really pleased to be able to support the project.

Pathway operations director Hayley Cliff and Dickie James, CEO of Staffordshire Women's Aid accepted the cheques.

Pathway have a 24 hour number, 01543 676800, while Staffordshire Women's Aid offer advice, guidance and help at www.staffordshirewomensaid.org and have a 24 hour helpline on 0870 2700 123.

Varied programme agreed upon

Hayes Green WI

PRESIDENT Sandy Hobbs welcomed members to the January meeting and wished them a Happy New Year.

Elaine Smith read the minutes of the previous meeting and Rosemary Larkin gave the financial statement.

The meeting is always the planning session for the coming year. The ladies were presented with numerous possibilities, and a varied and interesting programme was agreed upon.

During the tea break a bring and buy sale was held, and the competition was won by Elizabeth, Ann and Wendy. The raffle was won by Diane.

On the group's behalf, congratulations have been sent to Denise Moreton OBE.

The next meeting will be at St John's Church Hall, Heath Hayes, at 7.30pm on February 4.

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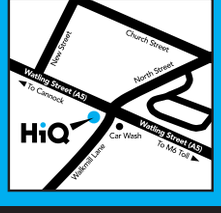

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Wrestling first for town

WRESTLING fans can catch the latest action at Cannock's Prince of Wales Centre next month – with all bouts taking place in a steel cage. It is the first time in the town that fighting has taken place inside the 15ft cage.

The bill sees Dylan Roberts take on Paul Malen, while James Terry and Big Tim Burns will vie for the Slam Wrestling championship. Adam Idol and Eddy Woods compete for the inter-counties title before Layton Cole takes on Jason Maverick. The night, on Wednesday, February 25, also features a six-man tag match. Call 01543 578762.

Clampdown wanted on properties access law

HUNDREDS of council officials in Staffordshire, the Black Country and Wyre Forest have power to enter private homes and businesses – prompting calls for a clampdown.

By Daniel Wainwright

Council leaders said the officers – who work in environmental health, child protection, trading standards or housing – would only do so 'proportionately'.

But Big Brother Watch, the civil liberties campaign group, said many powers of entry were meaningless.

Some authorities in the north, including Northumberland and Leeds, have more than 500 such officers. The national average is 45.

Wyre Forest District Council has 109 such officers. Wolverhampton has 71 and Sandwell has 61.

Walsall has 40, Staffordshire County Council has 36, Lichfield has 33, Cannock Chase has 27, Stafford has 19 and South Staffordshire has 18.

Reduce

Dudley Council has 15 such officers and nine of those, working in children's services, are required to obtain a magistrate's warrant before going into a home.

The coalition Government pledged to reduce the number of Powers of Entry but Big Brother Watch discovered at the end of 2012 there were 19,375 local authority officials who can enter private homes or business for a wide-ranging number of reasons.

This figure is unlikely to have changed significantly as a Home Office review into powers of entry was only just completed in November, the campaigners said.

When the review findings were published, ministers said the number of powers would be reduced from 1,237 to 912, a reduction of 325.

Sandwell Council's leader Councillor Darren Cooper said: "We have upped the ante in terms of private sector housing. There have been cases of properties that were substandard with people living in poor conditions. We have used our powers to insist that landlords get the work done.

"Just because there are officers with these powers, it does not mean they will use them without good cause. The powers have to be used proportionately."

Emma Carr, director of Big Brother Watch, said: "Few people would expect that public officials would have the power to enter your home or business.

"The general public have been left high and dry, at the mercy of an army of pen-pushers who can enter our homes as they please."

Local government minister Kris Hopkins said: "We agree with Big Brother Watch that action needs to be taken to protect civil liberties.

"This government has clamped down on the overuse and abuse of snooping by town halls. Across government, over 300 powers of entry are being abolished, and safeguards are being introduced on a further 200."

Thousands have their say about libraries' future

THOUSANDS of people took part in the consultation over the future of Staffordshire's libraries.

Their views will be now be considered by the county council, which is considering handing over the running of sites to community groups. There are 43 libraries across Staffordshire.

Councillor Mike Lawrence said: "Libraries have already changed a great deal in the last decade, but user numbers are still falling.

"We need to change, radically, to energise our libraries so they are better used by their communities.

"We've talked to thousands of users, non-users and staff. We've listened to what they have to say and our amended proposals to reflect those changes."

It is planned that 24 smaller libraries will be handed over to community organisations.

Councillor Lawrence added: "The public response made it clear there was a greater confidence and appetite to take on management of local libraries in some areas, than others.

"Some community groups will take responsibility for managing and delivering their local library service as soon as they have satisfied the necessary conditions," he said.

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Workers get set to aim for fitness pursuits title

WORKPLACES in Staffordshire are getting on their marks for a health campaign for employees.

Businesses and organisations will be on the starting blocks for the eight-week physical activity programme, My Team 2015. The initiative is part of the Workplace Challenge programme that wants more people to get fit and stay active.

Organised by Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, it will run until March 1. It was set up to encourage workers across the county to get together with colleagues and win points for their workplace by taking part in sports and other physical pursuits using an online activity tracker tool.

The company that earns the highest number of points will clinch the title of the most active workplace in Staffordshire.

Participants are also urged to take to social media to help inject sparks of motivation and a little friendly rivalry into this year's competition.

Healthier

Teams can share their team goals and successes via social media and challenge other local businesses to take up the challenge using Twitter via #MyTeam2015

Mark Thornewill, of Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, said: "We would love to see all sectors of the business community embracing the social spirit of the new campaign, using the camaraderie generated to support their employees in leading healthier lifestyles and in turn enjoying the productivity and cost-saving benefits a more physically active workforce has been proven to generate."

SASSOT also runs a volunteering scheme for residents who love sport and have spare time are invited to take part in coaching or fundraising. It works in partnership with the Join In charity that was created three years ago to build on the success of the London 2012 Olympics.

For details and to register for free, visit www.workplacechallenge.org.uk

Cash awards for athletes

Talented sailor Sarah Norbury, aged 17, was awarded a grant last year

A TEENAGE sailing sensation from Staffordshire is encouraging other young athletes to apply for funding from a special pot of cash which was launched to support them.

Staffordshire County Council has set up a scheme to help some of its most promising young sports people, offering grants of up to £750 towards the costs of training and taking part in competitions.

Sarah Norbury, from Stone, was awarded a grant last year from the Staffordshire Talented Athlete Fund (STAF) and went on to win a bronze medal at the Junior European 420 Championships in Poland. The 17-year-old said: "I am very grateful to STAF for the grant as it helped with the travel costs of getting to all those events."

Applicants must either live or go to school in the county and have been born between September 1, 1994 and August 31, 2003.

Athletes with a disability must have a birth date between September 1,1987 and August 31, 2003.

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Cut fares while fuel is cheaper, says Osborne

BUS companies should cut their prices and pass on the saving from cheaper fuel to passengers, George Osborne has said.

The Chancellor was in Staffordshire to launch his pensioner bonds when he said bus companies that put up prices as fuel costs rose should now offer discounts as they have come down.

'Reward savers'

Bus companies including National Express West Midlands and Arriva put the price of a single adult fare up 10p to £2.20 at the start of the month.

But the price of crude oil has plummeted and there are some forecourts, including one in Walsall, selling unleaded petrol for less than £1 a litre. Asked if bus companies should reverse their fare increases, Mr Osborne said: "Any company that had passed on the increase in the oil price a couple of years ago should pass on the decrease now.

"Whether that's energy companies, at the petrol pumps or airline tickets.

"A fall in the oil price is a real benefit but to feel the full benefit they have to have the saving passed on."

National Express West Midlands said it could not cut the price.

Spokesman Jack Kelly said: "We buy our fuel two to three years' worth at a time, which gives us stability in the oil price and protects customers from large increases in fares. Unfortunately, that also makes it difficult to react quickly if there is a decrease."

George Osborne meets pensioners at the Oak Farm Hotel, Cannock

The Chancellor has pledged to make Britain the richest major economy in the world by the 2030s if voters stick with his 'long-term economic plan'.

Addressing a group of pensioners in Hatherton, on the border between South Staffordshire and Cannock, he said he wanted to 'reward savers'.

Recently, the website selling the Government's new market-leading pensioner bonds struggled under the weight of demand from savers clamouring for better returns on their cash.

A pot of up to £10 billion has been put aside for the 65-plus bonds, which went on sale through the website of National Savings and Investments.

Mr Osborne was visiting Oak Farm Hotel to talk to pensioners invited by South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson and Tory candidate for Cannock Chase, Amanda Milling.

He also pledged the Government would help hundreds of workers at Cadbury set to lose their jobs to find new ones and gain new skills and said he would be returning to the West Midlands to set out the region's own 'long-term economic plan'.

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New Rae of light on music scene

Album reviews

By Leon Burakowski

LANCASHIRE singer/songwriter Rae Morris lives up to her promise, after collaborations with Bombay Bicycle Club, Clean Bandit and Tom Odell, on her debut album Unguarded.

Her poised, elegant style with an appealing hint of vulnerability has lots of appeal. Kate Bush is a clear influence and Rae also seems a kindred spirit to Ellie Goulding. The 22-year-old has several potential hits on this Atlantic Records release including Under The Shadows, jazzy groove Closer and her collaboration with Fryars (AKA) on the frosty electronica of Cold.

She will be in concert, with support from Fryars, at Birmingham's Institute in Digbeth on Thursday, February 5.

Rae Morris — poised, elegant style on her debut album Unguarded

Accessible

It had been long delayed by the previous record label's inertia but **Fryars** second album **Power** (Fiction) is finally out and hopefully Fiction will be rewarded for giving a platform to Benjamin Garrett (AKA Fryars), one of the most talented and promising singer-songwriters on the UK electronica scene. Let's just hope it didn't get lost in the festive rush.

He has a knack of writing a song that instantly sounds familiar, which is usually a good sign, and does that trick several times here, with Sequoia, Thing Of Beauty and Cool Like Me.

His melancholy sound is accessible enough to appeal to pop fans of outfits like Bastille and admirers of more esoteric artists like James Blake.

American indie folk/rock band **The Decemberists** are proof that a great band can still make it through talent and graft, rather than manufactured hype. Fronted by Colin Meloy, the Oregon outfit have imprinted themselves on the US scene with honest heartfelt rootsy rock, particularly since they ditched long concept songs in favour of a more radio friendly approach.

Last album The King Is Dead went straight into the US chart at number one and featured Grammy nominated single Down By The Water. They even found themselves on The Simpsons.

Seventh studio album **What A Terrible World What A Beautiful World** (Rough Trade) will continue their success due to its strong songs delivered in traditional semi-acoustic style. The key song 12/17/12, written after the Newtown school shootings, is a harmonica-accompanied classic that would make Springsteen proud. See The Decemberists in concert at The Institute in Birmingham on February 18.

If pop genius Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys had grown up in an age of moogs and synths, then he may have made an album like **Panda Bear Meets The Grim Reaper** (Domino).

Singer/songwriter Noah Lennox (AKA Panda Bear), from American experimentalists Animal Collective, has created a highly atmospheric album blending fidgety electronics with plaintive vocals in his own style of techno-psychedelia. It includes a brainstorm of effects, such as yelping dogs on the stomping glam cruncher Mr Noah. The playfulness recalls Brian Eno's early solo work.

The title is no joke as a sense of loss haunts several of the songs, particularly Tropic of Cancer (with its refrain "you can't come back, you won't come back to me") and Lonely Wanderer with its gorgeous Debussy sample.

Songwriter and singer Stuart Murdoch exercises his demons over an eclectic variety of musical styles on **Girls In Peacetime Want To Dance** (Matador), the ninth studio album from Glaswegian band **Belle and Sebastian** and their first for five years.

The subjects can be sombre, such as the songwriter's struggle with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, but the music is anything but — hitting the dancefloor in a Daft Punk way on The Party Line and sounding akin to Erasure synth pop on Enter Sylvia Plat. However, The Cat With The Cream recalls the more tender indie-pop sounds of earlier albums.

Gaz Coombes, former frontman of Britpop trio Supergrass, is back with his second solo album, **Matador** (Hot Fruit/Caroline), a quality collection of songs blending acoustic guitar strumming and electronics. Songs like Seven Walls and To The Wire are subtle but rewarding. He's still Alright and he's at Birmingham Glee Club on February 9.

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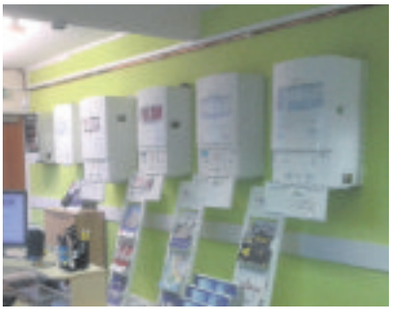
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Varied line-up of entertainment

The Merry Opera Company presents Rossini's great masterpiece of comic opera at the Garrick

Carl Donnelly – comedy

THE Lichfield Garrick has a varied line-up of entertainment over the next few days.

The Lichfield Players are bringing to the stage a string of much loved characters in a four-night run of 'Allo 'Allo until Saturday. Jeremy Lloyd and David Croft's play is based on the hit TV series and follows the misadventures of hapless cafe owner Rene Artois in occupied World War II France.

Meanwhile, some of comedy's favourite faces and rising stars will be taking part in the monthly Comedy 42 series of shows.

The first instalment on Saturday promises an evening of hilarity with the likes of Carl Donnelly, known for his appearances on Mock the Week, the intelligent humour of John Gordillo, and the offbeat comic Jon Wagstaffe.

Local funny man Chris Purchase will keep things in check and play host for the five shows in the series.

The Merry Opera Company presents Rossini's masterpiece of comic opera at the Garrick on Thursday at 7.30pm. Brimming with musical brilliance, bold humour and well loved tunes, The Barber of Seville is said to be a guaranteed evening of entertainment.

Then on Friday next week, The Upbeat Beatles will be presenting a new show. The Magical History Tour takes the audience through the ages of The Beatles'career, using projection and narrative, teamed with 'pinpoint accurate music and vocals'.

The Upbeat Beatles recreate the sheer fun, excitement and magnetic power of The Fab Four and their unforgettable music, with their attention to detail and stunningly precise reproduction.

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Ringers in farm visit to observe wild birds

LOWER Drayton Farm, near Penkridge, hosted a group of bird enthusiasts who looked at how management of the site helps wildlife.

Brewood Ringers were invited by farmer Ray Bower and partner Val James .

Established more than a century ago, the processes of 'ringing' and identifying bird species helps to generate information on the survival, movement and productivity of birds, leading to a greater understanding of why populations change and develop over time.

Having been encouraged by the findings of the group's first visit to the farm, Ray is keen to establish a long and mutually beneficial relationship with Brewood Ringers.

Allowed

"We hope to see Brewood Ringers visit the farm regularly in future, and are even planning special 'bird days' at our family farm attraction where members of the society will give talks on the species found at the farm," he said.

Brewood Ringers chairman Colin McShane said:" It has been very refreshing to work with Ray as it has allowed us to learn more about the local bird population.

"As our visits become more regular over the course of the coming year and beyond, we hope to expand upon what we initially observed."

Everything goes smoothly as stunt brings in £660

HE was forced to give up pizza, soup and ice cream after his beard grew so long. But it is no longer 'hair to stay' for Penkridge fund-raiser Gavin Davies after the father-of-three finally had a shave after 12 months.

The 32-year-old vowed not to cut off his facial fuzz for a year to collect cash for the bereavement charity A Child of Mine.

By Craig Hughes

It grew to eight inches and he was unable to eat some foods because of the mess it created as the hair got in the way.

The sales consultant at Bathstore in Stafford even had to carry a comb around with him after starting to grow it on Christmas Day 2013.

Difference

But after completing his challenge and raising more than £660 he finally had it chopped on Boxing Day.

It took around 20 minutes to be cut and then shaved and such was the difference his two-year-old son did not recognise who he was at first.

Mr Davies, of Francis Close, Penkridge, decided to raise money for the charity after friends lost their child, aged two, to cancer.

He said he was pleased to collect cash for the cause and thanked everyone for their support and is still aiming to collect £1,000.

"I had to change the way I was eating because it was getting in the way," he said.

"My face would be in the bowl before I realised.

"Once I got rid of the beard and looked in the mirror, I looked like a 12-year-old again.

"A soon as it started to come off I could feel the air on my face. It is a big difference – you can feel the cold," he added.

"It has been quite overwhelming what people have donated."

People can continue to donate through the www.justgiving.com/beard4acom web page.

A Child Of Mine helps anyone affected by the death of a youngster, provng practical information, guidance and support.

Gavin Davies with hairdresser Dinah Critchley who chopped off his beard

It won't be here much longer

It's all for a good cause

Brian gets chance to be tasting pie-oneer

A SCHOOL technician from Penkridge has won a place on a national panel to take part in a Pukka Pie taste challenge.

Brian Jenkinson, aged 62, has become one of 100 Pukka Supper Pie-oneers from across the UK to be selected for the exclusive taste test hosted by the pie brand.

"When I saw this opportunity, I thought it would be great to enter and I'm delighted to be chosen to take part," Brian said.

The 100 participants have been provided with a month's supply of vouchers for the company's pies.

They have been asked to share their favourite dishes to inspire people to create their own 'pie-fection' via the Pukka Pies Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pukkapiespukkapies

Launch

Rob Dixon, head of marketing at Pukka Pies, said: "We decided to launch a Pukka Supper Pie-oneer Taste Challenge to encourage busy workers, parents and young professionals to ditch the desire for quick-fix snacks such as toast or sandwiches and instead enjoy a quick-to-prepare, warm and comforting meal that will satisfy.

"We'd like to congratulate Brian for winning one of the coveted places. We're confident he will love our tasty pies, made with over 140 layers of flaky pastry, and so look forward to hearing about his great evening dinners!"

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Models Shown: Jazz 1.4 i-VTEC ES Plus Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic, Civic 1.4 i-VTEC S Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic, Civic Tourer 1.8 i-VTEC S Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic and CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC S Manual 2WD in optional Passion Red Pearl. Terms and Conditions: Nil Advanced Payment offer on Jazz 1.4 i-VTEC ES Plus Manual and Civic 1.4 i-VTEC S Manual, £499 Advanced Payment offer on Civic Tourer 1.8 i-VTEC S Manual, £999 Advanced Payment offer on CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC S Manual 2WD. All offers are correct at the time of going to print however Honda (UK) reserves the right to change this offer at any time. Models subject to availability. Written details available on request. The facilities offered are for the hire of goods. The scheme is available to recipients of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance or War Pensioners Mobility Supplement. To qualify for this offer you must be in receipt of a minimum of 12 months allowance. Valid for applications between 1 January 2015 to 31 March 2015 to Motability Operations Limited (Registered Company No. 1373876), City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HB. Promoter is Honda Motor Europe Limited trading as Honda (UK) at Cain Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1HL.

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Plans about to go before council

PLANNING applications registered with Lichfield District Council include:

Edial House Farm, Lichfield Road, Burntwood: Demolition of modern agricultural buildings, change of use of traditionally constructed barn and replacement of existing extension to form one dwelling, erection of two dwellings with associated works; works to listed building to enable the demolition of modern agricultural buildings, change of use of traditionally constructed barn and replacement of existing extension to form one dwelling, erection of two dwellings with associated works.

70 Uttoxeter Road, Handsacre,Rugeley: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two four-bedroom dwellings, two single detached garages and all associated works.

107 Uttoxeter Road, Hill Ridware, Rugeley: Single and two storey side extensions to form sitting room, study, utility and bedroom with en suite.

113 Highfields Road, Chasetown: Variation of condition no 2 of application 14/00508/FUL relating to layout (provide garages to both plots).

35 Bridge Cross Road, Chase Terrace: First floor side extension including four roof lights. Amendment to previous application number 08/00082/FUL.

12 Princess Street, Burntwood: Installation of two pitched roof dormers to front elevation.

Land and buildings at Newlands Lane, Stockwell Heath, Rugeley: Prior notification, change of use from agricultural building to form a four-bedroom dwelling.

Woodhouse Farm, Pipe Lane, Pipe Ridware, Rugeley: Erection of three agricultural buildings comprising grain store, potato store and infill building.

31 Tean Close, Burntwood: First-floor side extension to form two bedrooms and en suite.

Land Adjacent 37 Bridge Cross Road, Chase Terrace: Erection of three-bedroom detached dwelling and associated works.

Anan Restaurant, 3 Bridge Cross Road, Chase Terrace: Variation of conditions 5 and 7 of application 14/00521/COU relating to provision of a takeaway and delivery service.

Concerns were ignored, mother tells inquest

THE mother of a toddler who died at County Hospital after attending a pre-booked appointment told an inquest her concerns were repeatedly ignored in the hour leading up to his sudden death two days after his third birthday.

Jonnie Meek from Cannock died on August 11 last year, three hours after arriving at the hospital in Weston Road, Stafford, to trial a new milk formula, Cannock Coroner's Court heard.

The inquest on Thursday heard how the disabled toddler, who suffered from a genetic disorder, began choking and collapsed after his mother, April Keeling, had tried to alert medical staff to his deteriorating condition. But staff have denied any wrong-doing and a post mortem found the boy died of pneumonia.

Jonnie was born with De Grouchy syndrome, a rare congenital condition caused by a chromosome 18 abnormality. He also suffered from developmental delay, chest infections and other health problems.

His parents, from Bevan Lee Road, Cannock, wanted the new feed to be trialled on the children's ward. However, Miss Keeling told assistant coroner Margaret Jones that her son became irritable and restless 15 minutes after the new feed started.

The inquest was told that the feed continued and Jonnie was given extra suction to clear his secretions after he began coughing.

Mr Peter Ellis, representing Miss Keeling and Jonnie's father John Meek, asked if the outcome could have been prevented and Dr Gupta, who treated Jonnie, said: "I don't think the secretions were enough to cause his death. They may have added to the obstruction of poor lungs and underlying lung problems." The inquest was adjourned until tomorrow.

Tribute band in final gig

LOCAL tribute band Green Bay have announced they are to play their last ever show at The Prince Of Wales Centre in Cannock on Saturday, February 7.

Consisting of Daint on guitar and vocals, Jeff on bass, Leigh on guitar and Dodgy Cool on drums, the band play the songs of US rock band Green Day.

The numbers covered range from American Idiot to Basket Case, and from Minority to Good Riddance.

Green Bay's drummer Dodgy Cool said: "We always used to play our local shows at The Tackeroo in Hednesford but being as this is our last ever gig, we thought why not play it at the Prince Of Wales Centre where we played the Olivia Clarke benefit show ten years ago."

The concert at the Prince of Wales is an all-ages show with support from local band Amongst The People.

Admission is £5 in advance or £7 on the door. Doors open at 7.30 pm.

Green Day were formed in 1986 by lead vocalist and guitarist Billie Joe Armstrong and have sold 75 million records. They are among the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductees for 2015.

Green Bay will play their last show at The Prince Of Wales Centre next month

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HEATH HAYES & WIMBLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Winter Newsletter

JANUARY 2015 *Published four times a year by the Parish Council*

Grants

Over £9,000 awarded to local groups for the benefit of the area.

The precept has been set at £69,512.49 meaning the cost of the Council to the residents will again remain unchanged.

We have again entered the Best Kept Village Competition.

Remembrance Sunday was the best attended ever. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped.

What our Green Policies are

We were the first Council in the country to be awarded "Green Achiever" status.

The Hayes Green Centre has a high efficiency boiler, insulation, double glazing, timed sensor lights and thermostats on radiators.

We promote recycling and have information on our noticeboards and website.

Council Christmas cards are sent electronically at no cost to the Council. We send and receive correspondence by email wherever possible.

We comment on traffic proposals and report traffic issues to reduce congestion. We support "walking buses" and have produced a map to promote walking and cycling in the area.

The Clerk has an electric bike (50 miles on a 4p charge) to reduce Council mileage costs and to reduce our carbon footprint.

Nominations Requested

The Council has an annual awards programme and would like to receive nominations and reasons for the following categories.

Citizen of the Year
Business of the Year
Young Person of the Year

Nominations in writing to the Clerk. The awards will be decided at the March meeting and presented to the winners at the Annual Meeting on 1st April at the Hayes Green Community Centre.

Save the Date!

Meetings	Location	Coming up
4th February	Meetings are held at the Library except April (Hayes Green Community Centre)	April - Citizen and Business of the Year.
4th March		Young Person of the Year
1st April - APM		
20th May - AGM		
3rd June		
1st July		

Grants awarded to local groups

The Council has an annual grant scheme and groups or organisations that are of benefit to the area are considered for grants. Cheques will be presented at the 1st April meeting at the Hayes Green Community Centre. The following grants were agreed.

£200 to 1st Heath Hayes Scouts. 1st Heath Hayes Pioneers, 1st Heath Hayes Brownies. 3rd Heath Hayes Brownies, 4th Heath Hayes Brownies, 1st Heath Hayes Rainbows, 3rd Heath Hayes Rainbows, 1st Heath Hayes Beavers, 1st Heath Hayes Guides, 3rd Heath Hayes Guides, 2nd Valley District Seniors

£500 to Cannock Chase Drum Corps.

£200 to Five Ways Gorsemoor and Kingsmead Schools.

£600 to Meiji Juao.

£200 to KIWI Youth Club

£400 to The Source Youth Club.

£400 to Chase Wado Kai Karate Club.

£210 to Support Staffordshire Cannock Chase.

£500 to Bourne, Community Life, St John's Churches.

£250 to St Giles Hospice. £500 Cruse Bereavement.

£250 Midland Air Ambulance.

£100 to Heath Hayes Art Society. £50 to Breathe Easy. £100 to Heath Hayes Eagles. £50 to Cats Protection. £100 to Cannock Town FC. £400 to Heath Hayes Area Senior Residents Support Group and £500 to Burntwood District Community First Responder.

Local News

Best Kept Village Poster Competition

This competition in two parts is open to 5-7 year olds and 8-11 year olds who live in Heath Hayes and Wimblebury or attend local schools.
Please send in an A4 size entry advertising the 2014 BKV competition.
Prizes £10 - First, £7 .50 Second, £5.00 Third.

Heath Hayes Library

What are your views about the Council considering taking over the Heath Hayes Library? This would involve increasing the precept and therefore the amount that you pay to the Council.

Heath Hayes Art Society

The Council was pleased to choose the painting entitled "Robin" by Tony Guy as the winner of the annual painting competition.

Hayes Green Community Centre

What is on at the Centre

Monday 7pm to 8.30pm - Yoga
Tuesday - 7pm to 9pm - Zumba
Wednesday -7pm - Cannock Chase Drum Corps
Friday-7pm to 9pm - Meiji Judo
Saturday -11 am to midday - Drama Class
Sunday - 10am - Community Life Church

Heath Hayes Cabin

The Cabin is 60' x 12' and has a meeting room, male, female and disabled toilet and is disabled accessible.

There is also a small kitchen. The Cabin can be hired for community use and is £15 for four hours or £4.25 an hour. £30 for one-off events.

Wimblebury Remembrance Event

In 2014, the Council organised the first event specifically for Wimblebury and there was a gathering at 11.00am on Saturday 2nd November. This event will be held again next year and those wanting to attend should arrive by 10.40am, Sunday 1st November 2015.

Vehicle Security

The Council would like to remind all motorists of the need for vehicle security. Basics such as parking in garages, locking cars, not leaving valuables on display can help deter thieves. Also be aware of leaving vehicles unattended with the keys available for thieves to use.

Here to help you

I have been the Clerk for Heath Hayes and Wimblebury Council since 1995 and I am very proud to be with a hardworking and forward looking council.

If there is anything the council can help with, please contact me or any of the Councillors. Residents are welcome at all meetings.

Ray Smythe

Your local Council

Heath Hayes and Wimblebury Council

Email: clerk@heathhayes.staffslc.gov.uk

Post: 2 Norton East Road, Cannock, WS 1 1 9RT

Phone : 01543-448614

www.hhwpc.co.uk

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Cllr Alan Dean	Tel: 275 638	Email: alan.dean62@talktalk.net
Cllr Alison Spicer	Tel: 279 654	Email: alisonspicer@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
Cllr Bob Todd	Tel: 278 778	Email: bobtodd@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
New Heath Hayes		
Cllr Vyv Baker	Tel: 274 923	Email: timeout119hotmail.com
Cllr Ann Bernard	Tel: 274 427	Email: annbernard@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
Cllr Mike Sutherland	Tel: 01889 583095	Email: mike.sutherlandmail@yahoo.com
Hayes Green		
Cllr David Baker	Tel: 274923	Email: dtbaker@hotmail.co.uk
Cllr Val Baker	Tel: 274923	Email: valbaker2011@live.co.uk
Cllr John Bernard	Tel: 274427	Email: johnbernard@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
Wimblebury		
Cllr John Beddows	Tel: 279991	Email: john@portlandoptical.co.uk
Cilr Brian Bottomer	Tel: 277115	Email: bbottomer@btinternet.com
Cllr Diane Todd	Tel: 278778	Email: dianetodd@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
Clerk		
Ray Smythe	Tel: 486614	Email: clerk@heathhayes.staffslc.gov.uk

Children to enjoy wildlife activities

CHILDREN at Busy Bees Nurseries in Burntwood and Walsall are venturing into the great outdoors as part of an initiative developed in partnership with The Wildlife Trusts.

Designed to reignite children's curiosity for the natural world, and in doing so help protect its many wonders for generations of children yet to come, Busy Bees Goes Wild will be run at all of Busy Bees' 236 UK nurseries.

This special learning enhancement has been developed by The Wildlife Trusts exclusively for children who attend Busy Bees' nurseries and will be split into four sections – one for each season. As part of Busy Bees Goes Wild, children will take part in a number of wildlife-themed activities and document their progress in special scrapbooks designed by the charity.

Nursery manager Caroline Cooper at Busy Bees nursery in Burntwood said: "The children are very excited to be taking part in the Busy Bees Goes Wild awards programme, pulling on their wellington boots, hats and scarfs and venturing into the great outdoors to complete a range of fun and educational activities, both at nursery and at home.

"We hope this initiative will enhance our children's understanding and appreciation of nature and its many inhabitants, whilst providing them with an opportunity to have lots of fun."

Youngsters in tears after play centre closure shock

THE owners of a popular soft play centre that closed suddenly over the weekend, leaving youngsters in tears, say they may be forced to sell the business.

Go Bananas in Burntwood shut unexpectedly due to a dispute between the owners and the landlord.

Pre-booked parties had to be cancelled at the last minute and the firm says it is trying to refund customers who paid deposits.

Meanwhile, dozens of parents have continued to flood the company's Facebook page with angry messages about the closure.

Bosses say they are looking to relocate elsewhere but could be forced to sell the business if no alternative sites are found.

The latest statement from the firm on the Facebook page says: "I would like to confirm that Go Bananas Burntwood are looking at different options.

"Either to relocate the business and we are working very hard to find another suitable premises or if we cannot find a suitable premises in the local area, then we would consider selling the business.

Legal

"We are trying to resolve customer refunds by seeking legal advice. Please understand what has happened was out of our control and we are deeply sorry."

It adds: "We are still looking for new premises and have found two properties which may be suitable. Also we do have people interested in buying the business."

On Facebook, parent Sammy Longmore wrote: "Such an awful shame after you'd all worked to hard and it was doing so well."

Russell Cook wrote: "One very upset five year old this morning. We arrived for my son's birthday party to find the notice on the door. What will be happening to my deposit I have paid?"

The owners claim they are still locked out of the soft play centre in Smiths Close, Burntwood, due to the locks being changed on the doors.

Plea on hospital crisis

Jan Sensier, chief executive of Engaging Communities Staffordshire, which delivers Healthwatch, wants to hear from patients

PEOPLE affected by the University Hospital of North Midlands (UHNM) state-of-emergency admissions crisis are being urged to share their experiences with consumer champions Healthwatch Staffordshire.

The organisation is calling on patients whose care may have been affected by the crisis to contact them to ensure influence can be exerted on future service provision.

Staffordshire's biggest hospital declared a major incident this month owing to unprecedented levels of demand affecting Accident and Emergency and general admissions to the Royal Stoke and County Hospital sites.

Jan Sensier, chief executive of Engaging Communities Staffordshire, which delivers Healthwatch, said: "We need to hear from anyone whose care may have been affected by this major incident status – it could be waiting too long for care, lying in an ambulance outside the hospital, being treated in corridors, being diverted a long way from home to other hospitals or even having operations cancelled as a result of the issues at UHNM."

Call 0800 051 8371 or go to www.healthwatchstaffordshire.co.uk/x2

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195/65/15	£35.00	£129.00
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Advice on returning goods

SHOPPERS who have bagged a bargain in the sales are being reminded of their rights when taking unwanted items back.

As thousands of people deal with unwanted or unsuitable Christmas gifts, Staffordshire Trading Standards have revealed their top five tips for returning items.

Although high street stores do not have to accept returns if there is nothing wrong with the item, most will offer a gesture of goodwill. This could be in the form of an exchange, refund or credit note. County Councillor Gill Heath, cabinet support member for trading standards, said: "People have a right to take items back which don't meet their basic statutory rights.

"These rights essentially mean that the goods bought must be of a satisfactory quality, are what they are described to be, fit for purpose, and last a reasonable length of time.

For more information, visit www.staffordshire.gov.uk and search for Trading Standards.

Councils axe 2,800 jobs in last two years

MORE than 2,800 jobs in 10 councils across the West Midlands region have been axed over the past two years. Official accounts for each authority show almost £57 million has been spent on 'exit packages' for workers since 2012.

The employees went either voluntarily or through compulsory redundancy. The cuts have come as councils have seen their funding slashed. Wolverhampton City Council alone made 546 people redundant in 2013-14. Of those, 99 went compulsorily while the rest took voluntary redundancy.

It was a bigger year for job cuts than 2012-13, when 119 went.

The bill for redundancy in 2013-14 came to £6.1m compared with £1.7m the year before.

At Staffordshire County Council, there were 83 teachers in receipt of 'exit packages' and 514 other members of staff, costing £12,933,146.

The year before it had been £10,644,993 for 100 teachers and 399 others.

Cannock Chase Council spent £734,000 on 16 exit packages in 2012-14, dropping to £259,000 for four the following year.

Redundant

Stafford Borough Council spent £183,000 for six exit packages in 2012-13 and £18,000 for one the next year.

Lichfield District Council made six people redundant at a cost of £193,277 in 2012-13 and 27 at a cost of £630,878 in 2013-14.

South Staffordshire Council axed four jobs in each year, costing £96,000 in 2012/13 and £70,000 the following year.

Walsall Council axed fewer jobs in 2013-14 but at a greater cost. The figures show there were 279 redundancies in 2012-13 and 230 the year after.

The costs, however, increased from £3.4m to £4.5m.

Lickey ramble

CHASE & District Group Ramblers will be going on an eight-mile 'moderate' walk at Lickey Hills, Birmingham, on Sunday. Walkers should meet at Hednesford railway station car park for a prompt 9am departure. Call 07954 170369.

Yoga classes set to improve wellbeing

Sue Tupling will be staging classes throughout 2015

A STAFFORDSHIRE woman is aiming to help build a healthier community through the power of yoga. Sue Tupling will be holding a half-day workshop at Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall on Saturday, January 31.

''Yoga for Emotional Wellbeing is a unique combination of yoga and psychotherapy aimed at relieving the symptoms of anxiety.'' Sue said. "By taking part in the workshop people can learn techniques of deeply restorative Yin Yoga." Throughout 2015 Sue will be staging classes covering a number of topics such as stress, anxiety, relaxation, balancing the mind and finding your power within.

She added: ''The workshops will be great for improving mood and overall emotional wellbeing and for anyone working to reduce anxiety, stress and worry levels.''

The first workshop is from 10am to 1pm.

To get involved or to find out any more information about the workshops, contact Sue Tupling on 07411178380 or visit the website www.myyoga.org.uk for more details.

Tribute to forgotten men of the Great War

A WAR memorial to 160 men from Staffordshire who died in the First World War is to be erected in their hometown.

The £12,000 monument will pay tribute to servicemen from Chadsmoor in Cannock. More than 100 of the names that will appear on the Portland stone obelisk have never been commemorated on any shrine.

The Bishop of Wolverhampton, the Rt Rev Clive Gregory will lead the dedication service on April 18.

Funds for war memorials have traditionally been raised by public subscription which meant that some less well-off areas have never been able to honour their dead.

Councillor Derek Davis, chairman of the dedication organising committee, said: "I am very very proud that 100 years on, we will be able to pay proper respect to the sacrifice they made by providing a memorial." Members of the Staffordshire Regiment will bear standards at the dedication and a service will be held at St Chad's Church.

Book about village life

A STAFFORDSHIRE author has written a book about growing up in a pit village.

The Pride and The Shame of a Coalminer's Bairns by Poppy Whitfield tells of her troubled childhood, and her battle to tame her fears.

"This book is about how I tried to overcome my family difficulties by trying to devise various coping methods while I was growing up," she said.

"It's an inspirational story that people from all walks of life can relate to."

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- ☑ If you need to go into hospital, take all your medicines with you.

Gang raided home with the aim of getting drugs

BURGLARS raided the home of a suspected cannabis grower in Cannock, throwing a brick through the window, in the hope of getting drugs, a court heard.

Windows of the flat, in Surrey Close, were smashed and the intended victim narrowly dodged the brick which came crashing in to his bedroom.

When the occupant, who cannot be named, put his head through the broken glass to see who had done it, he was hit on the head with a prop, and a wheelie bin was thrown at him. He was later taken to hospital having suffered a heart attack.

Two of the raiders ran off before police arrived and have not yet been caught. But officers arrested the third member of the gang, Russell Astbury, crawling out from under a hedge in Oxford Road, said Miss Denise Fitzpatrick, prosecuting.

Victim

Astbury, aged 31, of Benion Road, Cannock, who admitted charges of attempted burglary and going equipped for theft, was jailed for 28 months.

Recorder Mr Simon Ward told him: "It's a shame you have gone back to committing offences. This was a planned offence, you knew why you were being asked to take part. You were equipped [and] you probably thought the victim would not complain.

"The occupier was at home, violence was used against him. you were part of the team, so you must take some responsibility."

Mr Neil Gerrity, defending, said police had seized some cannabis plants from the victim's address. "All my client says is, he was recruited that night to go to the address with a view of taking some cannabis from that address."

The father of three had played a 'subordinate role' in what was going on – the ringleaders had made off well before the police arrived, said Mr Gerrity.

The attempted break-in happened at abour 11.30pm on April 25.

Bosses tell of success

From left, Jo Christian, Dave Hickenbottom, Amanda Milling, Treasury Minister Andrea Leadsom and Alex Wilkinson-Hughes

AMANDA Milling, prospective parliamentary candidate for Cannock Chase, accompanied Andrea Leadsom, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, on a visit to Cannock-based small business Product Nation.

Formed in 2012 by Alex Wilkinson-Hughes, Product Nation supplies office and stationary products around the UK from its unit in Cannock. The firm's annual turnover has doubled each year and there have been three recent additions to the team – including a Business to Business account manager, employed solely for the needs of the local area. Alex and the team from Product Nation discussed with Mrs Leadsom and Ms Milling some of the challenges when they first set up the business.

Mrs Leadsom said: "Product Nation is a great example of a small business which is seeing real growth and demand for its products and services.

"I talked with the team about their experiences of setting up their business and, in particular, the support that they have received from the banks since setting up and that they need from them to help with their expansion plans."

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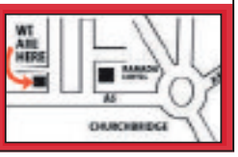

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- Stop smoking
- Drink less
- Recycle more
- Sell your house
- Run a half marathon
- Do more for charity ☑
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- Drink less coffee
- Watch less television
- Eat less fast food
- Be a bungie jump

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Wallace Court,Cheslyn Hay
- Three Storey Detached House
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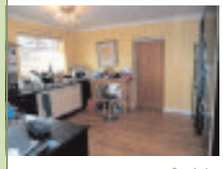
- Lounge
- Open Plan Kitchen/Diner/Family Room
- Study & Sitting Room
- Four Bathrooms
- NO UPWARD CHAIN!!
- Front & Rear Gardens

Offers in Excess of £460,000

Allport Street,Cannock
- Detached Three Storey House
- Three Bedrooms
- Three Reception Rooms
- Kitchen/Diner
- Utility Room
- Guest W.C

Offers in Excess of £300,000

NEW



Sandy Lane,Cannock
- Semi Detached Cottage
- Four Double Bedrooms
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- Dining Room
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- Three Acres of Land
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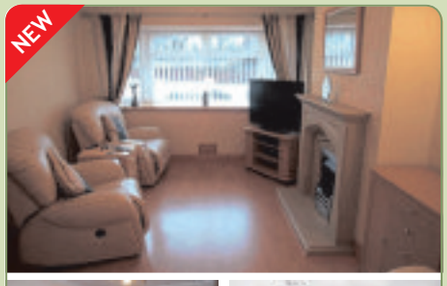
£400,000

Pennine Drive,Cannock
- Detached House
- Generous Corner Plot
- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge & Dining Area
- Kitchen
- Bathroom

Offers in Excess of £200,000

NEW



New Horse Road,Cheslyn Hay
- Extended Semi Detached House
- Corner Plot
- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Dining Area
- Breakfast Kitchen
- Conservatory
- Guest W.C & Family Shower Room
- Front Rear & Side Gardens
- Gated Off Road Parking & Garage

£180,000

REDUCED

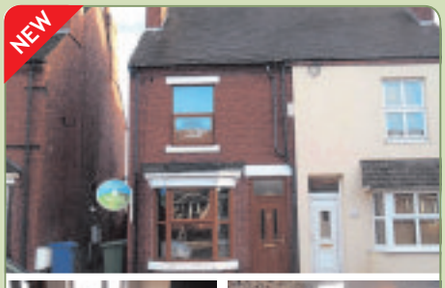
Tennscore Avenue,Cheslyn Hay
- Extended Semi Detached
- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Conservatory
- Family Bathroom
- Front & Rear Gardens

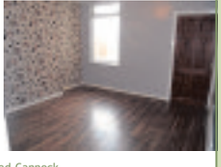
£145,000

East Cannock Road,Cannock
- Traditional Semi Detached
- Three Bedrooms
- Through Lounge Diner
- Kitchen
- Conservatory
- Family Bathroom

£145,000

NEW





Cannock Road,Cannock
- Traditional Semi-Detached
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Utility Room
- Family Bathroom & Guest W.C
- Generous Rear Garden
- Off Road Parking
- NO UPWARD CHAIN

Offers in Excess of £100,000

NEW

Poplar Avenue,Cannock
- Semi Detached
- Two Double Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Kitchen Diner
- Family Bathroom
- Seperate W.C
- Gas Central Heating
- Double Glazing where specified
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Potential For Off Road Parking (subject to permission)

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Mountside Street,Hednesford
- Semi Detached
- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Dining Room
- Kitchen
- Family Bathroom

£110,000

Stafford Road,Cannock
- Semi Detached
- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge
- Kitchen Diner
- Family Bathroom
- Upstairs W.C

£105,000

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HEDNESFORD

CONSIDERABLY IMPROVED AND EXTENDED WELL MAINTAINED TWO BEDROOMED SMI DETACHED HOUSE
Located In Popular Cul-de-sac Adjoining Public Open Space

- Lounge
- Breakfast kitchen
- Double glazed conservatory
- Two bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Built-on garage
- Gas fired central heating
- Fully double glazed
- Sorry no DSS, pets or smokers
- EPC rating: D (68)

£595 pcm

75 BLAKE CLOSE,
HEDNESFORD

THREE BEDROOM SEMI DETACHED HOUSE
Located In Popular Residential Area

- Lounge/dining room
- Kitchen
- Three bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Fully double glazed
- Gas central heating
- Off road parking
- Gardens
- Sorry no pets, DSS or smokers
- EPC rating: D (67)

£650 pcm

2 MILL PLACE, TEDDESLEY
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Situated On The Picturesque Rural Estate Of Teddesley Park

- Lounge
- Fitted dining kitchen
- Inner hall
- Two double bedrooms
- Family bathroom
- Oil fired central heating
- Fully double glazed
- Communal grounds and parking
- Sorry no pets, smokers or DSS allowed
- EPC rating: C (77)

£635 pcm plus service charge

12 CHALFONT AVENUE,
CANNOCK

WELL EQUIPPED THREE BEDROOMED END MEWS HOUSE
Located In Popular Residential Area Of The Town

- Refitted/extended breakfast kitchen
- Lounge/dining area
- Landing
- Three bedrooms
- Refitted bathroom
- Garage
- Gas fired central heating
- Fully double glazed
- Sorry no DSS, pets or smokers
- EPC Rating: D (64)

£625 pcm

138 CANNOCK ROAD,
BLACKFORDS, CANNOCK

THREE BEDROOM MID TERRACED HOUSE
Convenient For Local Facilities

- Dining room
- Sitting room
- Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Three bedrooms
- Fully double glazed
- Gas central heating
- Rear garden
- Sorry no pets, DSS or smokers
- EPC rating: E (47)

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- Two bedrooms
- Refitted shower room
- Gas central heating
- Fully double glazed
- Built-on garage
- Sorry no pets, DSS or smokers
- EPC rating: C (69)

£675 pcm

5 RICKYARD PLACE, TEDDESLEY PARK
ESTATE, PENKRIDGE

WELL EQUIPPED TWO STOREY TWO BEDROOMED BARN CONVERSION
Located On The Picturesque Rural Estate Of Teddesley Park

- Open plan lounge/kitchen
- Landing
- Two bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Fully double glazed
- Oil fired central heating
- Communal grounds
- Sorry no pets, DSS or smokers
- EPC rating: B (82)

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- Dining kitchen
- Conservatory
- Three bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Gas central heating
- Double glazed
- Gardens
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THREE BEDROOMED SEMI DETACHED HOUSE
Located In Popular Residential Area Of The Town

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- Lounge
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- Breakfast kitchen
- Three bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Gas fired central heating
- All windows double glazed
- Sorry no pets, smokers or DSS
- EPC Rating: D (60)

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Brindley Crescent, 3 Bedroom Terraced £550pcm
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School Road, 1 Bedroom Flat £450pcm
Teddesley Way, 3 Bedroom Detached House ..... LET £625pcm
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The impressive BKV trophy being crafted by workers at Endon Forge

Codsall villagers celebrate as award is unveiled in 1974

Anti-litter posters displayed in Penkridge during 1980

Kinver boasted its own Milk Bar in 1963

The rural community council's 1956-57 report

60 years on and village contest still blooming

IT started 60 years ago before lawnmowers had motors and hanging baskets were confined to chocolate box lid pictures.

A lot about the world has changed since then but, in spirit, the Best Kept Village competition has remained indomitably the same.

The competition was launched in 1956 by the newly set-up Community Council of Staffordshire.

Its aim, set down in the council's annual report of 1956-57, was 'to give an incentive to the countryman to take an ever increasing pride in his own village and its immediate surroundings.'

It was decided to run the competition on a village basis although it was sponsored in each case by the local parish council.

Forty-three villages entered in that inaugural year and for the preliminary heats the county was divided into four areas: north, central, south-east and south-west.

MEMORY LANE

By Marion Brennan

In discussions prior to the competition's launch, it was felt that villages in the county's mining areas would find it difficult to compete with those in rural areas of natural beauty.

The annual report notes: "It was, therefore, gratifying to find that Cheslyn Hay took such pride in their village that, by dint of a community effort, it reached the final."

Impressive

Sixty years on, that ethos remains. Chris Welch, chief executive of the Community Council of Staffordshire, says: "We try not to be overwhelmed by the pretty-pretty villages. We're not looking for hanging baskets. The idea is to dig a little deeper and find out what the degree of involvement is."

The competition is judged by a pool of around 70 volunteers, many of whom have been involved for more than 30 years. Visually, they are noting the appearance of churchyards, pub surrounds, street furniture like bus shelters and telephone boxes, and looking out for signs of litter and dog fouling.

A group will visit three or four villages in a day, each with its own lead judge, who will be the most experienced.

The first trophy was an impressive wrought-iron affair created at Endon Forge, which incorporated the Staffordshire Knot and stood on an oak post.

More than 200 villages have entered over the past six decades. In May1984, in a bid to hold on to their Best Kept Village title, members of the Codsall and District Civic Society, armed with brooms, trowels and clippers, kept a nightly vigil at the Lone Singer Gardens, ahead of the judging.

There have been two remarkable winning streaks in the last decade, with both Weston (2004-08) and Haughton(2011-14) notching up four victories in a row.

Schoolchildren clean up the brook in Wombourne in 1994

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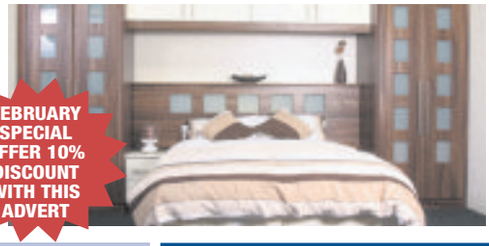

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- Visits to Maastricht, Amsterdam and Antwerp
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Eurostar and air breaks also offered

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

Carcasonne, Avignon and Provence

Six days various departure dates

PRICE FROM £449

- Return flights
- Five nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Guided walking tour and time to explore Carcassonne
- Full day visit to Avignon and the Roman Pont du Gard
- Canal du Midi cruise
- All coaching in France
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Air Holidays (ABTA V7812, ATOL 2325)

Suffolk Skies, Coast and Country

Three days departing July 3

PRICE FROM £159

- Return coach travel
- Two nights half-board accommodation
- Visits to Lavenham, Aldeburgh and Southwold
- Entrance to Jimmy's Farm
- Entrance to Bridge Cottage to see the John Constable Exhibition
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Bath and Oxford

Buy one get one free

Two days departing March 22

PRICE FROM £155

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Visit to Oxford
- Visit to Bath
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Jersey

Four to eight days
Departures February to December

PRICE FROM £285

- Return flights
- Bed and breakfast accommodation at the three-star Mayfair or Metropole hotel in St Helier
- Return airport to hotel transfers in Jersey
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Special offers for bookings made before March 31- see brochure for details

Organised by Modern Hotels (ABTA V3101, ATOL 0752)

Elvis Exhibition at the 02 Arena

Two days departing April 18 and May 9

PRICE FROM £115

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Ticket to the Elvis Exhibition at the 02 Arena, London
- Visit to Greenwich
- Free time in central London
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

London Theatre by coach

Two days selected weekend departure dates

PRICE FROM £139.95

London is the natural home of theatre and the musical is king in the capital's world-famous West End. British musicals that prove a runaway success here often go on to triumph on Broadway and around the globe.

The winning combination of engaging writing, captivating stage design and commanding performance has enabled London theatres to achieve box office smashes time and time again. And it's the songs that make people return to the capital a number of times and some of the most well-known tunes have become part of the national canvas.

There are two options travelling by coach from which to choose, Saturday Night Theatre or a Theatre Weekend with Dinner.

The Saturday Night Theatre break, from £139.95, includes a ticket for the evening show, whereas the Theatre Weekend with Dinner option starts from £149.95 and includes an evening meal following the matinee performance.

Both trips include return coach travel, a choice of theatre ticket from an extensive list of shows, overnight bed and breakfast accommodation in an outer-London four-star hotel, along with some free time in the capital for shopping or sightseeing.

Pick-ups offered are Dudley, Shrewsbury, Telford, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

**The from price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure/web page for details.*

Single room supplements apply.

Organised by Omega Events (ABTA Y590X)

Dubrovnik, Dalmatian Coast and Montenegro

Pick of the week

Eight days various departure dates

PRICE FROM £869

With its blend of history, Mediterranean ambience and truly stunning natural beauty, Croatia is simply one of Europe's best-kept secrets.

This two-centre holiday starts off with a drive inland to the Krka Valley. Here the River Krka flows through a series of gorges, lakes and rapids before meeting the sea. The whole valley and area is stunning and has been awarded national park status.

In Split enjoy a guided walking tour of the Emperor's Diocletian's monumental palace, which is fully integrated into the town with a jumble of buildings grafted onto it. This is followed by a visit to nearby medieval Trogir, boasting an exquisitely decorated 13th century cathedral and where the real monument is the town itself.

Heading south to Mostar see the 16th century mosques, turkish houses, the fine 19th century town hall plus the amazing reconstructed bridge, linking the two halves of the old town.

Dubrovnik is a beautiful baroque city with huge imposing ramparts. The main avenue is completely paved with marble and throughout the city there is a wonderful arrray of monasteries, decorated churches and civic buildings dating from the 14th century.

A tour of Montenegro, one of Europe's newest countries is also included. The first stop is made at the medieval town of Kotor, walled with a labryinth of cobbled streets surrounding its Orthodox Cathedral, followed by the medieval town of Budva. The return is across the inland sea by boat to Dubrovnik.

PRICE INCLUDES

- Return flights
- Seven nights half-board accommodation
- Guided visits of Dubrovnik and Split
- Visit to Krka National Park
- Tours of the Dalmatian Coast and Montenegro
- Visits to Trogir and Mostar
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability – supplement applies

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

SHOP Local

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Celebration Costumes is located on Market Street, Hednesford WS12 1AF.

We offer a friendly service with 100's of costumes to choose from. Whether you are a budding super hero or wish to take on the role of King Henry VIII, let us find the right costume for you.

Child hire prices from £4. Adult hire prices from £10.

New costume in for new year 'Breaking Bad'.

For further information contact 01543 424348

Rebecca Jayne's @ Mix n Match Bridal Wear

Rebecca Jayne's Exclusive Bridal Wear, at Mix n Match, is located in the centre of a Rugeley town.

The business is co-owned by mother and daughter, Eve and Rebecca. In November this year, they celebrated 20 YEARS in business.

They pride themselves on their personal service, professionalism and a warm welcome to all new brides and their families. Specialising in special occasion Mother of the Bride/ Groom from designers such as John Charles, Ann Balon and Mascara, with a stunning collection of hats, fascinators and shoes.

The first floor Bridal suite offers gowns from the leading Bridal Houses. Ten major labels allowing an array of different styles and choice for all brides from simple to flamboyant.

The ladies offer a full selection of sizes from size 2 - 30. They have a specialist inhouse designer offering an couture, vintage collection.

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At Little Treasures we provide high quality care for children aged 6 weeks to 12 years which is reflected in our 'outstanding' OFSTED rating.

Our priority is to provide a safe, stimulating and challenging learning environment in which children can thrive and develop, learning through first hand experiences. Building children's confidence and self-esteem through play in order to become motivated and independent learners.

We provide before and after school care offering school drop off and pick up from all Penkridge and Dunston schools, lots of activities are available whilst also providing the opportunity to wind down after the school day. We run a holiday club where lots of fun activities and trips to local attractions are organised.

We work in partnership with parents/carers offering flexibility for working parents and building positive relationships in order nurture each child's individuality and provide opportunities for growth and development.

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- Batteries - We stock a range of Batteries all carrying a 2/3 year Guarantee We can replace same day if needed and also offer a call out service if required.
- Exhausts " We fit most models of vehicle exhausts from Exhaust sections to complete Exhaust systems.
- Repairs " Partners of the Blue Oval Club we fit all genuine parts to all makes of vehicles.
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Single level shopping centre with over 27 different units under one roof in Rugeley.Brewery St Shopping Centre has been serving the public of Rugeley for over two decades and with a wide range of shops, a warm welcome and friendly service, it continues to be popular with local residents.

Units are available in a range of sizes for anyone looking to start their own business. New tenants can benefit from the established foot fall generated by the range of retailers within Brewery Street Shopping Centre. The inclusive rent agreements are competitive and are currently available as short term agreements and special concessions are available for first timers including 3 month starter packages.

Pop up units also available £20 per day (all inclusive)

Over the years many of our tenants have been successful and moved into their own shops in the town centre with our complete support . The Centre has and still continues to support the town remembering that this is where the Traders Association and town lottery was started. Our café offers a warm and friendly atmosphere with a varied menu at competitive prices. We offer good clean toilet facilities with baby changing and disabled facilities. We also have free parking for our customers.

Call the centre manager 07966 453338 - m.brazier@lap.co.uk for more information.

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Tributes to the super troupers

ABBA fans are in for a treat with two top tributes to the Swedish pop wonders of the 1970s and 80s taking place.

Abba Mania celebrate 40 years since Agnetha, Bjorn, Benny and Anni-Frid won Eurovision by playing the hits at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre tomorrow night (Friday), whilst Bootleg Abba take their opportunity to thank them for the music at Bilston's Robin 2 next Saturday, January 31. The Robin show will also feature the Bee Geez Downunder.

There's more nostalgia at the Grand this Saturday with the Sensational 60s Experience featuring Herman's Hermits, Dave Berry, The Swinging Blue Jeans and The Union Gap, among others.

Three comedians stand up at club

A NIGHT of stand-up comedy and a three-course meal is being hosted by a Black Country rugby club.

Dudley comic Wayne Beese leads the acts on the bill tomorrow night (Friday) at Stourbridge Rugby Club's Stourton Park ground, off Bridgnorth Road.

Joining rising star Wayne will be improviser Ben Briggs and Brummie comedian Andy White.

Tickets cost £20 which includes the meal. The show starts at 7.30pm.

Call John Slim on 07989 786913, the club on (01384) 395000 or email linda@stourbridgerugby.com

Theatre group see Peter Pan put on trial for refusing to grow up

Harvey is revived at The Rep

MAUREEN Lipman, fondly remembered as the BT grannie, will join Gimme Gimme Gimme actor James Dreyfus in Lindsay Posner's new production of 1940s American comedy Harvey at Birmingham Rep next month, before heading for the West End.

The Broadway comedy-drama by Mary Chase was made into a classic movie starring James Stewart as Elwood P Dowd who, to the dismay of his family, has an unwavering friendship with a six-foot tall rabbit called Harvey, who is invisible to everyone else. The production is based on the Broadway revival of 2012 which starred Jim Parsons, from TV's Big Bang Theory, as Dowd.

Lipman, who was at the Rep in 2013 in Oliver Cotton's Daytona, plays Dowd's exasperated sister.

It is at the Centenary Square venue from February 6 to 21.

Maureen Lipman and James Dreyfus in Harvey at The Rep

AN UPCOMING play will see Peter Pan head back to Neverland and then stand trial for refusing to grow up.

The Trial of Peter Pan, which will have a free performance at the Birmingham Rep's Door venue, features a cast made up entirely of actors with learning disabilities from the Stourbridge-based Side by Side theatre group.

Director Susan Wallin MBE, aged 71, from Norton, said: "In our play Peter is all grown up and the whole play has been inspired by the idea in the original JM Barrie work that Wendy's daughter was the next to go with him.

"I decided to carry that on and our play features her great-granddaughter Angela. However, every time Peter comes back to our world he ages and he is now 47 but thinks he is still a child, so he is put on trial for refusing to grow up."

The play will be shown for free at the Birmingham Rep on Saturday, January 31, and will receive a full run at the Stourbridge Town Hall in June.

Actors

Mrs Wallin said the theatre group had received several awards.

"They are all dedicated theatrical actors," she said. "We have performed at the Edinburgh Fringe as well as abroad in Sweden and Prague.

"The actors' ability to take on the challenges of learning great swathes of lines, as well as being responsible for moving their own set on the stage, is remarkable."

The group is entirely self-funded and Mrs Wallin said it was currently on the lookout for new members.

She said: "The only prerequisites are that they have to be dedicated and have a real interest in theatre.

"This is not a club but a real theatre group that requires commitment and a dedication to the arts."

The show at the Rep will run from 12.30pm to 1pm on The Door stage. Tickets are free and can be booked via birming hamrep.co.uk or by calling 0121 236 4455.

From left, David Atkins, James Emtage and Susie Schartz rehearse for Side By Side's The Trial of Peter Pan

It's not the only Pan-tastic production at The Rep as the main house hosts riotous comedy Peter Pan Goes Wrong, Mischief Theatre's spoof about an accident-prone theatre company in similar vein to their hit production The Play That Goes Wrong. It's on from Tuesday to Sunday.

Brian Conley stars in circus musical Barnum at Wolverhampton Grand from Tuesday to Saturday. Science fiction rock 'n' roll musical Return To The Forbidden Planet shows robots rock at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre, Monday to Saturday.

Classic rock and some horror too

SINGER Paul Carrack, the voice of Mike & The Mechanics and Ace, will be in concert at the Symphony Hall, Birmingham, on Saturday night with old favourites and songs from his recent Rain or Shine album.

Other gigs include Queen fronted by Adam Lambert at the Barclaycard Arena tomorrow (Friday), the Mark Lanegan Band at Digbeth's The Institute on Monday and vintage jump jive from King Pleasure & The Biscuit Boys at the Robin 2 on Thursday.

Horror rockers Slipknot are at the Barclaycard Arena on Tuesday — fans of the macabre may also want to check out Night of the Zombie by The Circus of Horrors at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on Saturday.

Solo or Bust' for singer Charlie

THE one refusenik to the hugely successful McBusted venture, former Busted lead singer Charlie Simpson, brings his folk-influenced songs to Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms on Tuesday.

Simpson, unlike his celebrity former bandmates, has not joined the supergroup blend of McFly and Busted who have been enjoying arena-sized success around the country. Instead he will be performing without a band for the first time in intimate acoustic shows performing songs from his top ten album Long Road Home.

Tickets cost £16.50. Call 0870 320 7000.

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CHOICE

Alfred Hitchcock

Holocaust: Night Will Fall (Channel 4, 9pm)

With Holocaust Memorial Day taking place on January 27, 2015, this timely documentary reflects on the time Allied forces liberated the Nazi concentration camps in 1944-45. Their shocking discoveries revealed the full horror of what had happened for the first time. With the aid of British, American and Soviet footage, the Ministry of Information's Sidney Bernstein aimed to create a documentary that would provide undeniable, lasting evidence of the Nazis' horrific crimes. However, before it could be completed, and despite initial support from the British and US Governments, the film was mothballed; it was deemed too sensitive for the changing political climate. Now, seven decades on, and with help from the Imperial War Museums, Bernstein's film has been restored and completed.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **1.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **3.00** Escape to the Continent. (R) **4.00** Final Score. **5.20** Pointless Celebrities. (R)

6.10 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

6.30 Now You See It. The best and worst of the magic world, featuring a man who disguises himself as an armchair and strange happenings in a chip shop, as well as a few tricks going wrong.

7.00 The Voice UK. Emma Willis and Marvin Humes join the hopefuls backstage for the third round of blind auditions. As usual, coaches Tom Jones, Will.i.am, Ricky Wilson and Rita Ora decide whether they want the acts based purely on their singing voices, spinning in their chairs to show their interest. Tonight's hopefuls include a YouTube sensation once signed with Justin Timberlake's record label, a Lady Gaga tribute act and a former member of 1980s charts stars Black Lace – although whether he tries to impress the coaches with a verse of two of Agadoo remains to be seen.

8.25 The National Lottery: Win Your Wish List. Shane Richie hosts the game show in which two contestants answer questions to try to win each other's dream prizes. Including the lottery draws, presented by Gaby Roslin.

9.15 Casualty. Rita gets a shock when her ex-husband turns up at the hospital. Connie's daughter Grace goes missing, while Lofty deals with a patient who thinks her child is being abused.

10.05 BBC News; Weather.

10.25 Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights. Gabby Logan presents highlights of the fourth-round matches, including Birmingham City v West Bromwich Albion at St Andrew's and Chelsea v Bradford City at Stamford Bridge; National Lottery Update.

11.55 The Football League Show. Manish Bhasin presents highlights and all the goals from the latest fixtures.

12.55 Film: Primeval. (2007) **2.25** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.30** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Film: San Demetrio, London. (1943) **7.35 Film:** Angels One Five. (1953) **9.10** Fred Dibnah's Age of Steam. (R) **9.40** Fred Dibnah's Age of Steam. (R) **10.10** British Isles: A Natural History. (R) **11.00** FA Cup Rewind: Fourth-Round Classics. **12.00** James Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **12.30** The Churchill Obituary. **1.30** Great Britons. (R) **2.30** Live International Bowls. The World Indoor Championships. **4.30** Somerset: After the Floods. (R) **5.30** Flog It!

6.30 Porridge. (R)

7.00 The Two Ronnies Sketchbook. Ronnie Corbett and Ronnie Barker present another selection of favourite monologues, musical numbers and sketches, including the classic Fork Handles. Last in the series. (R)

7.30 Ronnie Barker: The Many Faces Of. The story of a quiet, dedicated man who might have been a bank manager, but went on to become one of the nation's most popular comedy stars. Ben Elton, Michael Grade, David Renwick and Josephine Tewson are among friends and colleagues who remember his partnership with Ronnie Corbett in sketch show The Two Ronnies, as skinflint grocer Arkwright in Open All Hours and crafty prisoner Fletch in Porridge. There is also a look at his prolific writing career and his work as an actor in serious roles. (R)

8.30 The Two Ronnies: The Studio Recordings. A collection of unedited takes from the classic comedy show, featuring both famous and more obscure sketches from programmes recorded in 1979 and 1980. (R)

9.00 Holbein: Eye of the Tudors – A Culture Show Special. Waldemar Januszczak looks at the life and career of Henry VIII's court artist Hans Holbein, exploring where he came from and examining the unsettling secrets hidden in his work.

10.00 Film: The Artist. (2011) A 1920s movie actor gives an actress her big break, but his career suffers with the advent of sound. Oscar-winning silent drama, starring Jean Dujardin and Berenice Bejo.

11.35 International Bowls. The World Indoor Championships. Highlights of the Open Singles semi-finals.

12.35 Film: Thirteen Days. (2000) **2.50** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Adventure Time. **8.30** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.50** Scrambled!: Hulk and the Agents of Smash. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.25** ITV News; Weather. **12.35** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.35** The Undriveables. (R) **2.05** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **3.05** Doc Martin. (R) **4.05** Big Star's Little Star. (R) **5.05** Regional Programme ; Weather.**5.15** ITV News; Weather. **5.30** You've Been Framed! Top 100 Senior Moments. (R)

6.30 Planet's Got Talent. Highlights from the global Got Talent franchise, including a Michael Jackson-themed diabolo juggler, a farmyard animal impressionist and a moped stuntwoman.

7.00 Harry Hill's Stars in Their Eyes. A sales assistant, a senior manager of a tanning salon chain, a children's singing tutor, a mother and a student impersonate famous singers as they vie for a place in the final.

8.05 Take Me Out. Sales consultant Lewis from Glasgow, strongman Archie from Wiltshire, toy designer Adam from Cornwall and model Scott from London vie for the attentions of 30 single women, intent on capturing their interest and securing a date. However, first they must get the female participants to keep their lights on as a sign of approval. Host Paddy McGuinness monitors their progress and reviews the dating action from last week's couples on the Isle of Fernandos.

9.20 The Jonathan Ross Show. New series. The host is joined by Take That, Kingsman: The Secret Service stars Colin Firth and Taron Egerton, actress Caroline Quentin and comedienne Katherine Ryan.

10.20 ITV News; Weather.

10.30 Film: Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason. (2004) Comedy sequel, starring Renee Zellweger, Colin Firth and Hugh Grant.

12.30 Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.35** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.00** Snowdon Race 2014. **7.55** The Morning Line. **9.00** The King of Queens. (R) **9.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.30** Frasier. (R) **11.00** Frasier. (R) **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.25** Speed with Guy Martin. (R) **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Cheltenham and Doncaster. **4.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.00** The Simpsons. (R) **5.30** The Simpsons. (R)

6.00 Channel 4 News.

6.30 The Restoration Man. A London couple have a dramatic vision for a wartime airfield control tower in the Highlands, but find the restoration of the 700 window panes swallows 40 per cent of their budget. (R)

7.30 Guy Martin's Spitfire. In May 1940, a Mark 1 Spitfire was shot down and crash-landed on a beach in northern France, where it slowly sank into the sand. The wreckage was finally recovered in the 1980s and stored in France for more than 20 years. Guy Martin joins a two-year project to rebuild the aeroplane, revealing the engineering and skills involved, and providing a fitting homage to the bravery of everyone involved in its service. (R)

9.00 Film: Holocaust: Night Will Fall. (2014) Premiere. In 1945, the Ministry of Information's Sidney Bernstein was commissioned to make a documentary that would provide undeniable evidence of the Nazis' crimes. He assembled a team of film-makers including Alfred Hitchcock to record the true horror of the concentration camps, but despite initial government support, the project was deemed too politically sensitive and never broadcast. Now, 70 years later, Bernstein's film has been restored and completed by the Imperial War Museum, and this programme tells the story of its creation. Narrated by Helena Bonham Carter.

10.20 Film: Unstoppable. (2010) Tony Scott's action thriller, with Denzel Washington and Chris Pine.

12.10 Film: The Departed. (2006) **2.45** Hollyoaks. (R) **5.00** SuperScrimpers: Winter Survival Tips. (R) **5.55** NFL: Rush Zone.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Access. **10.40** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **11.35** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **12.30** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **1.25 Film:** Columbo: Death Hits the Jackpot. (1991) Detective drama, with Peter Falk and Rip Torn. **3.25 Film:** Columbo: Murder Under Glass. (1978) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk. **5.00 Film:** Columbo: A Matter of Honour. (1976) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk.

6.25 Elvis by the Presleys. Tribute to Elvis Presley, featuring candid interviews with his ex-wife Priscilla and their daughter Lisa Marie, plus private photographs and home movies from the Presley archives, along with vintage performance material. The Presleys also offer personal insights into various aspects of Elvis's life, including his tours, time in Hollywood and personal relationships. (R)

8.05 Elvis – The 1968 Comeback Special. The singer's classic TV special, which saw him make a return to live performance after more than eight years away, with the show featuring an array of musical set-pieces, including a jam session with his old backing band and a mini-musical. Songs include Heartbreak Hotel, Hound Dog, All Shook Up, Jailhouse Rock, Don't Be Cruel, Love Me Tender, Trouble, Can't Help Falling in Love and Gospel Medley. (R)

9.05 5 News Weekend.

9.15 Celebrity Big Brother. Catching up with the celebrities as they react to Friday night's eviction, revealing how the departure has affected the remaining contestants – and whether the outcome of the public vote has anyone else fearing for their place in the competition.

10.15 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation. New series. Julie discovers a bomb has been planted in her car, while DB gets a phone call demanding he confess to arresting the wrong man in a serial killer case.

11.15 Law & Order. New series. Cyrus Lupo returns to New York after four years abroad, and he and Green investigate two suicides that seem to be linked.

12.10 SuperCasino. **3.10** Celebrity Big Brother. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Great Movie Mistakes **8.00** Top Gear **9.00 Film:** Eagle Eye (2008) **10.50** Family Guy **1.55** Crims **2.25** Uncle

BBC Four

7.00 Serengeti: Unnatural Histories **8.00** Bright Lights, Brilliant Minds: A Tale of Three Cities **9.00** Spiral **10.55** Only Yesterday: The Carpenters' Story **11.55** Duets at the BBC **12.55** Top of the Pops: 1980 **1.30** Sounds of the 70s 2: Art House Glam – Get in the Swing **2.00** Bright Lights, Brilliant Minds: A Tale of Three Cities **3.00** Only Yesterday: The Carpenters' Story **4.00** Close

ITV2

11.15 The Cube: Celebrity Special **12.15 Film:** Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey (1993) **2.00** Funniest Ever You've Been Framed! **3.00** You've Been Framed! **4.35 Film:** Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang (2010) **6.50 Film:** Ocean's Thirteen (2007) **9.20** Take Me Out – The Gossip **10.05 Film:** I Am Legend (2007) **12.00 Film:** Couples Retreat (2009) **2.10** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.35** Pixie Lott: The Hot Desk **2.45** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

1.55 Wycliffe **3.05 Film:** Carry On Loving (1970) **4.55** Agatha Christie's Marple **7.00** Doc Martin **8.00** Foyle's War **10.00** Lewis **12.05** Wycliffe **1.10** Bomb Girls **1.55** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4

1.35 Africa Cup of Nations Highlights **2.35 Film:** Battle of the Bulge (1965) **5.50** Storage Wars **6.45** Storage Wars: Texas **7.45 Film:** Driven (2001) **10.00** Africa Cup of Nations Highlights **11.00 Film:** 8 Mile (2002) **1.15 Film:** South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut (1999) **2.35** Nitro Circus **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

11.35 New Girl **12.30** Melissa & Joey **1.30** How I Met Your Mother **2.30** The Big Bang Theory **3.30** Bad(ish) Robots **4.30** Rude(ish) Tube **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** The 100 **9.00 Film:** Hot Tub Time Machine (2010) **11.00** The Inbetweeners **12.10** How I Met Your Mother **1.10** Don't Trust the B**** in Apartment 23 **2.10** The Cleveland Show **3.15** One Tree Hill **4.00** Desperate Housewives **4.40** The Tomorrow People

Film4

11.00 Destination Gobi (1953) **1.00** The Three Musketeers (1993) **3.05** Carry On Up the Khyber (1968) **4.50** Only You (1994) **7.00** America's Sweethearts (2001) **9.00** Hitman (2007) **10.50** In Fear (2013) **12.30** Scary Movie (2000) **2.10** Basket Case 3 (1992) **3.55** Close

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CHOICE

Zoë Wanamaker

Mr Selfridge (ITV, 9pm)

For newcomers, this returning drama is inspired by the life of charismatic American entrepreneur, Harry Gordon Selfridge and series three picks up in 1919, just after the end of the First World War. There's no shortage of familiar faces joining the cast, including Zoë Wanamaker (My Family) as Russian Princess Marie de Bolotoff; Rosalie Selfridge is played by Kara Tointon (EastEnders) and Kara's sister, Hannah, plays her rebellious sibling, Violette. In the first of the new run, the shadow of war is brightened by a wedding as Harry's eldest daughter, Rosalie, ties the knot with Princess Marie's handsome son Serge (Leon Ockenden).

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Sunday Politics. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Match of the Day Live. Bristol City v West Ham United (Kick-off 2.00pm). **4.05** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.35** Songs of Praise. **5.10** Nature's Boldest Thieves.

6.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

6.30 Countryfile. The team is in the Highlands of Scotland, following in the footsteps of Robert Burns. John Craven is at the Falls of Foyers on the banks of Loch Ness, finding out about the poet's Highland tour and how the area is such a stronghold for the elusive red squirrel. He also visits Killiecrankie, where he meets a fiddle player inspired by a contemporary of Burns. Ellie Harrison speaks to photographers and poets who take inspiration from the landscape, and heads into the Cairngorms, where she learns to drive a pony and carriage. Plus, Tom Heap investigates the problem of food poisoning from chickens.

7.30 Still Open All Hours. A few mysterious goings-on in the shop convince Granville the place is haunted by Arkwright, and a surprise visitor from the past gets the entire street talking. Last in the series.

8.00 Call the Midwife. Barbara treats a first-time mother, but the birth does not go according to plan. Sister Julienne worries about Nonnatus House's financial problems, and a new nurse arrives.

9.00 Last Tango in Halifax. Caroline receives a worrying phone call to say the police have baby Flora and her nanny Holly is in the cells. Gillian is angry when Gary offers to pay for her wedding.

10.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

10.30 Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights. Mark Chapman presents action from the latest fourth-round matches.

11.30 The Apprentice USA. Surviving candidates Meat Loaf, Marlee Matlin, Dionne Warwick and others are tasked with creating an advert for a new videophone.

12.55 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.00** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.15** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **8.00** Countryfile. (R) **9.00** The Football League Show. (R) **10.00** FA Cup Rewind: Fourth-Round Classics. **11.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **12.30** James Martin's Food Map of Britain. (R) **12.45 Film:** The Long and the Short and the Tall. (1960) Second World War drama, starring Laurence Harvey. **2.30** Live International Bowls. The World Indoor Championships. **5.15** Ski Sunday.

6.00 Film: Real Steel. (2011) Premiere. In the future, boxing matches between eight-foot robots are one of the world's biggest sporting draws. A washed-up human prizefighter finds an abandoned android and sets about restoring it to become a potential champion, a project that reunites him with his estranged 11-year-old son. Sci-fi drama, starring Hugh Jackman, Dakota Goyo and Evangeline Lilly. Edited for daytime broadcast.

8.00 Top Gear. New series. Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May are in Russia as the motoring magazine returns, taking part in a race across the urban landscape of St Petersburg. James defends the honour of the car in a very small Renault, Richard tries to prove that pedalling is faster by riding a bicycle, while Jeremy attempts to demonstrate that water is the quickest way across town by piloting a hovercraft. To make matters more complicated, all three presenters are racing not only one another but also the Stig, who is making his way toward the finish line by public transport. Plus, the new Lamborghini Huracan is put through its paces and a celebrity takes to the test track for Star in a Reasonably Priced Car.

9.00 Dragons' Den. The business ideas contest returns after a mid-series break, with Kelly Hoppen, Piers Linney, Peter Jones, Deborah Meaden and Duncan Bannatyne evaluating more pitches.

10.00 Film: Shadow Dancer. (2012) Premiere. Thriller, starring Andrea Riseborough, Clive Owen and Gillian Anderson.

11.35 Billionaire's Paradise: Inside Necker Island. (R)

12.35 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **1.30** Holby City. (R) **2.30** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.30** Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.50** Scrambled!: Deadtime Stories. (R) **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.35** ITV News; Weather. **12.40** Harry Hill's Stars in Their Eyes. (R) **1.35** Catchphrase. (R) **2.20** Midsomer Murders. (R) **4.15 Film:** The Man with the Golden Gun. (1974)

6.35 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.45 ITV News; Weather.

7.00 Get Your Act Together. Actor Nigel Havers, 1980s pop star Sinitta, TV presenter Gaby Roslin, comedian Rufus Hound and rapper Chip are paired with leading variety acts to compete for a place in the final.

8.15 All Star Family Fortunes. New series. Hairy Biker Dave Myers and Coronation Street's Jack P Shepherd team up with their families in an attempt to win a jackpot of £30,000 for charity. Vernon Kay hosts.

9.00 Mr Selfridge. New series. Harry is grief-stricken as the family gathers for Rose's funeral, but nine months later and the Selfridges are in high spirits at Rosalie's wedding to a Russian aviator.

10.00 ITV News; Weather.

10.20 Churchill: 100 Days That Saved Britain. Drama-documentary drawing on letters, diaries and the testimony of Winston Churchill's personal physician to depict his triumphant first three months as prime minister in 1940.

11.20 The Undriveables. A woman who hates going above 30mph tries to get up to speed, while a man with spatial awareness issues struggles to get a feel of the width of his car. (R)

11.50 The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as four contestants answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to take on ruthless quiz genius the Chaser and secure a cash prize. (R)

12.45 The Store. **2.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.10** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.45** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.10** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. (R) **1.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.25** The Simpsons. (R) **2.55** The Simpsons. (R) **3.30 Film:** Maid in Manhattan. (2002) Romantic comedy, with Jennifer Lopez. **5.35** Channel 4 News.

6.00 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. Mike and Louan McGrane have long dreamt of moving to the Caribbean and have chosen the idyllic Cayman Islands as the perfect place for a relocation in five years' time. With a budget of £250,000, Jonnie Irwin sets about showing them five properties that fit the bill.

7.00 Phil Spencer: Secret Agent. Phil Spencer seeks buyers for two shabby semis in the north of England. Former cabbie Allan wants to move out of his family home of 33 years in Gosforth, Newcastle, while Dawn and Daz are surprised their house in Ripponden, West Yorkshire, is having trouble selling, until the property expert points out their bare walls, dodgy doors, dark decor and rather risque artworks.

8.00 The Hotel. Mark decides to bring Torquay's Gay Pride to the Cavendish, hoping the event will be highly profitable, but to guarantee a big crowd he needs to book a headlining celebrity.

9.00 Walking the Nile. Reaching his final country, Egypt, Levison's journey takes him through strongholds for the Muslim Brotherhood opposition group, where security must be tightened. Last in the series.

10.00 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Team captains Sean Lock and Jon Richardson are joined by Reginald D Hunter and Aisling Bea, while Holly Walsh is in Dictionary Corner with Susie Dent. Jimmy Carr hosts. (R)

11.05 Film: Evil Dead. (2013) Premiere. Horror remake, with Jane Levy.

12.55 The Last Leg. (R) **1.50 Film:** Joe Somebody. (2001) **3.30** Kirstie's Best of Both Worlds. (R) **4.25** River Cottage Bites. (R) **4.35** SuperScrimpers. (R) **5.05** SuperScrimpers 2013 Resolutions. (R) **5.30** Face the Clock. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Pip Ahoy! (R) **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.55** Chloe's Closet. **7.05** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.10** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.25** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.35** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.55** Little Princess. (R) **8.05** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.20** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **8.25** Wanda and the Alien. **8.30** Milkshake! Bop Box. (R) **8.40** Zack and Quack. (R) **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.10** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Access. (R) **10.50** The Hotel Inspector. (R) **11.45** The Hotel Inspector. (R) **12.45** The Hotel Inspector. (R) **1.40 Film:** Dudley Do-Right. (1999) Comedy, starring Brendan Fraser. **3.20 Film:** Cheaper By the Dozen 2. (2005) Comedy sequel, starring Steve Martin. **5.05 Film:** Zookeeper. (2011) Comedy, starring Kevin James.

7.00 Film: Bulletproof Monk. (2003) A mysterious Tibetan monk is entrusted with protecting an ancient and mystical scroll. As modern-day Nazis seek out the relic in a bid to resurrect the Third Reich, the monk searches for a suitable successor to take over his task – and a pickpocket is the unlikely choice. Martial arts thriller, starring Chow Yun-Fat, Seann William Scott, Jaime King, Victoria Smurfit and Karel Roden. Edited for violence.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 Celebrity Big Brother. The ups and downs of life in the BB house as friendships and alliances are made, battle lines are drawn and arguments erupt.

10.00 Film: The Darkest Hour. (2011) Premiere. Two software entrepreneurs on a business trip to Moscow get caught up in an invasion by a race of invisible aliens. Sci-fi horror, with Emile Hirsch and Olivia Thirlby.

11.45 Cats Do the Funniest Things. Compilation of internet videos, including cats playing musical instruments, dressed in costumes and riding on vacuum cleaners. Narrated by Iain Lee, with commentary by Susan Calman.

12.45 Car Crash TV. (R) **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** Storage: Flog the Lot! (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarm. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Pop's Greatest Dance Crazes **7.30** The Voice UK **9.00** Backchat with Jack Whitehall and His Dad **9.30** Russell Howard's Good News **10.00** Family Guy **10.45** Crims **11.15** Family Guy **12.05** Backchat with Jack Whitehall and His Dad **12.35** Russell Howard's Good News **1.05** Bangkok Airport **2.00** Crims **2.30** Sweat the Small Stuff **3.00** Bangkok Airport

BBC Four

7.00 Shoah: First Era **11.25** Sound of Song **12.25** Elvis: That's All Right 60 Years On **1.25** The Beatles' Please Please Me – Remaking a Classic **2.20** The Heart of Country: How Nashville Became Music City USA **3.50** Close

ITV2

11.50 Take Me Out **1.00** Take Me Out – The Gossip **1.45 Film:** Homeward Bound II: Lost in San Francisco (1996) **3.35 Film:** E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial (1982) **5.50 Film:** Along Came Polly (2004) **7.35 Film:** The Mummy (1999) **10.00 Film:** The Hangover (2009) **12.05 Film:** The Invention of Lying (2009) **2.00** Life's Funniest Moments **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

1.50 Film: The Great St Trinian's Train Robbery (1966) **3.45** Rosemary & Thyme **4.45** Inspector Morse **7.00** Lewis **9.00** Les Dawson: An Audience With That Never Was **10.00** Northern Lights **11.05** Lewis **1.05** The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes **2.05** Judge Judy **2.45** Countrywise **3.40** Emmerdale

ITV4

1.15 Counting Cars **2.10** Pawn Stars **4.30** Africa Cup of Nations Highlights **5.30** Africa Cup of Nations Live. **8.30** Pawn Stars **9.00 Film:** The Day of the Jackal (1973) **11.55** River Monsters: Untold Stories **1.00** Hell on Wheels **1.55** The Cycle Show **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen

E4

12.30 Revenge **1.30** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **2.30** The 100 **3.30** Melissa & Joey **4.30** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **6.00** Marry Me **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.00 Film:** A Knight's Tale (2001) **10.35** The Inbetweeners **11.45** Rude Tube **12.50** The Cleveland Show **1.50** Rules of Engagement **2.40** One Tree Hill **3.20** Hollyoaks

Film4

11.00 Laughter in Paradise (1951) **1.00** Mirror Mirror (2012) **3.05** The Golden Child (1986) **4.55** Holy Man (1998) **7.15** The Simpsons Movie (2007) **9.00** Safe House (2012) **11.15** Aguirre, the Wrath of God (1972) **1.10** Undefeated (2011)

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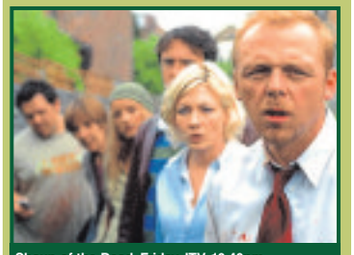
FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Mrs Miniver, BBC2, 3.05pm
A British housewife's settled existence is thrown into upheaval by the outbreak of the Second World War, as her husband and eldest son are called up and her small town is devastated by bombing. She spiritedly tries to make the best of things, looking after local children, watching over her youngest son's love life and capturing an enemy airman. Drama based on Jan Struther's book, starring an Oscar-winning Greer Garson, with Walter Pidgeon. (1942)

TUESDAY
The Wooden Horse, BBC2, 3.35pm
British PoWs in a German camp try to escape their captors by taking up gymnastics, and using a vaulting horse to conceal the tunnel they are digging. However, even if they manage to escape the camp, the journey to neutral territory will not be an easy one. Fact-based Second World War drama, starring Leo Genn, David Tomlinson, Anthony Steel and David Greene. (1950)



Shaun of the Dead, Friday, ITV, 10.40pm

WEDNESDAY
he Mexican, BBC1, 12am
A petty crook finds himself in a tricky situation when he tries to smuggle an antique gun from Mexico into America for his Mob boss. Comedy thriller directed by Gore Verbinski, with Brad Pitt, Julia Roberts, James Gandolfini, Gene Hackman and JK Simmons. (2001)

THURSDAY
Return from the River Kwai, BBC2, 3.40pm
An American pilot is shot down over Japanese-occupied Thailand. He joins a unit of guerrillas in the hope of escaping – but they end up battling to rescue a troop of starving Allied PoWs. Second World War drama sequel, starring Chris Penn, Edward Fox, Denholm Elliott, George Takei, Timothy Bottoms and Tatsuya Nakadai. (1988)

FRIDAY
Shaun of the Dead, ITV, 10.40pm
An unambitious 29-year-old man trapped in the job from hell and recently dumped decides to get his life back on track. Unfortunately, he has to put his plans on hold when zombies rise from their graves and stalk the streets of London's suburbs to feast on the living. Comedy horror, starring Simon Pegg, Nick Frost, Kate Ashfield, Dylan Moran, Lucy Davis, Bill Nighy and Penelope Wilton. (2004)

PICK OF THE WEEK

Dominic and the team are righting the wrongs

Dominic Littlewood is not a man to be messed with. Okay, sometimes his accent is so thick it sounds like he's speaking in a foreign tongue, but when it comes to catching out shifty builders, rogue traders and conmen tricksters, he certainly knows what he's doing.

It's a sad fact that there are too many instances in this country of folk being ripped off by people using forgery and fraud, although the silver lining is that surely it has to be a considerable amount fewer than 15 years ago – when Dominic first got into the television industry.

In this new series for ITV, Dominic is doing what he does best – confronting bad builders, meeting the people whose lives have been ruined by dodgy contractors, and, with the help of builder Chris Payne and designer Pippa Jameson, fixing up their homes and making them liveable again.

"Bad Builders Bang to Rights is a series where I investigate consumer complaints about bad tradesmen," Dominic explains. "It's not just about builders, it can be anyone involved in the industry, who is relied upon to sort out problems in your home.

"When we start getting complaints about a particular person or company, then I start doing some investigation

If we find they are doing things badly and they are not really showing respect to people, we gather evidence and then we write to them.

We normally write to them on quite a few occasions and ask them to give us their opinion on what's been going on as obviously it's only fair to give them a right to reply and there might be a justifiable reason to why they have done what they've done."

But as confident as Dominic can be, he admits that it can be a nerve-racking situation.

When confronting these dodgy builders, he says: "You never know what's going to happen in that scenario. They could get violent, they could get threatening, they could run, argue, they could ignore you, spit at you, punch you – you never know what's going to happen.

"But for me because I know so much about them I really want to challenge them on behalf of the victims and other members of the public."

In this first programme, Dominic and the team come to the aid of pensioner Betty Hall and her son Trevor, whose house resembles a building site.

Betty was widowed seven years ago, at a similar time when son Trevor was going through a divorce, so they decided to move in together.

They settled on a ramshackle old house in Walberton, West Sussex, and employed a local building firm to help with fixing it up.

However, almost a year after work on their dream home started – after months of delays and having paid substantially more than the contract price – work ground to a halt, forcing Betty and Trevor to sack the builders – but they had to spend another £20,000 simply to make the house liveable. But Dominic finds them living in terrible conditions, with no central heating or a fully functioning kitchen, with incomplete bedrooms and bathrooms.

As Pippa and Chris set about getting neighbours and friends involved in transforming the house in two weeks, can Dominic get answers from the builders responsible?

Bad Builders – Bang to Rights, Tuesday, ITV, 8pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Broadchurch
ITV, 9pm
Last week, Hardy faced a race against time as Ellie discovered a startling new piece of evidence, forcing them to reassess their suspicions. Now, as the acclaimed mystery drama reaches the halfway point, Miller is struggling to control her sister Lucy amid family tensions, Alec must confront his demons, and Mark Latimer has to make a decision. Viewers can expect many more twists and turns as the story builds toward a dramatic conclusion. David Tennant and Olivia Colman star.

Catastrophe
Channel 4, 10pm
First episodes of sitcoms rarely go down well with audiences – Fawlty Towers received an extraordinary amount of criticism when it first aired, and yet is now regarded as a classic. So it's unusual for one to hit the ground running – which is why Sharon Horgan and Rob Delaney deserve plenty of plaudits after last week's great opening edition. It introduced us to the characters they've both created and play who are, funnily enough, called Sharon and Rob. Well, at least they won't get confused. This time around, pregnant Sharon is trying hard to get to grips with the idea of Rob living with her – and her brother Fergal isn't exactly helping the situation.

TUESDAY
Touched by Auschwitz
BBC2, 9pm
Feature-length documentary marking the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camp by Red Army troops. Laurence Rees travels to Jerusalem, Chicago, London, Bavaria, Krakow and Tel Aviv to talk to six survivors, along with their friends and families, who discuss the problems, challenges and triumphs they have experienced since the end of the Second World War. Among those interviewed are Tadeusz, who became a doctor but still had to fight persecution by communists in Poland, and Hermann, who went on to become a successful antiques dealer in Bavaria, but still suffers from recurring nightmares.

Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
ITV, 9pm
The comedian and animal lover continues on his mission to help hand-rear animals orphaned in the wild across South Africa, Namibia and Zambia, and this week he gets a welcome blast from the past. Viewers may recall last year's first series, which saw Paul help adorable elephant calf Nkala. Well, during tonight's instalment of his latest trip, he's reunited with his old friend.

WEDNESDAY
Midsomer Murders
ITV, 8pm
New series. Return of the long-running mystery drama, starring Neil Dudgeon and Gwilym Lee. At the Luxton Deeping Crime Festival, the unveiling of a newly discovered novel by deceased Midsomer crime writer George Summersbee is jeopardised when the manuscript is stolen and local artist Suzie Colebrooke is electrocuted by a booby-trapped roulette wheel. Can new father Barnaby untangle a web of jealousy and find the killer?

Midsomer Murders, Wednesday, ITV, 8pm

Wolf Hall
BBC2, 9pm
Anne Boleyn summons Cromwell, anxious to know whether she has an ally in him, and he witnesses her venting her frustrations on her ladies-in-waiting. The king starts to take notice of Cromwell and comes to rely on the lawyer's advice, but then news arrives from York that Cardinal Wolsey has been arrested by Harry Percy, a vengeful act for denying his betrothal to Anne.

THURSDAY
Eat Well for Less
BBC1, 8pm
New series. MasterChef judge Gregg Wallace and greengrocer Chris Bavin set out to help families with their food shopping, showing them simple and effective ways to save money on their current bill. First up are the Booths from Lancashire. Mum Jenny claims to be cautious at the supermarket, always looking out for the best deals, but dad Howerd's impulse buys mean they always end up paying more than they should. Now they want to save £40 a week so they can build a home extension.

FRIDAY
The Musketeers
BBC1, 9pm
The king sends the swordsmen to talk to prophet Emilie of Duras, who is raising an army to march on Spain as a result of visions she claims to have received from God. It's clear she and her followers pose a danger, and as anti-Spanish riots begin, Aramis is chosen to return to her camp and discredit the woman - before she pushes France into an ill-timed war with its neighbouring country. Meanwhile, Rochefort continues to clash with Ambassador Perales, and resorts to blackmail and murder to resolve the problem.

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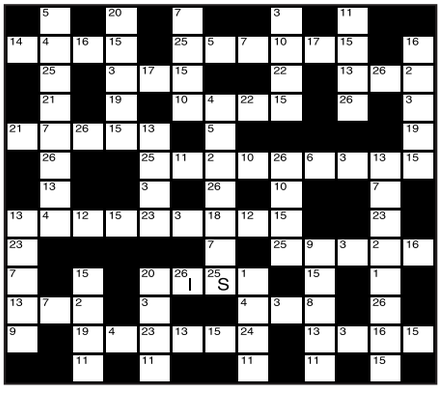
BRAIN GYM No.309

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



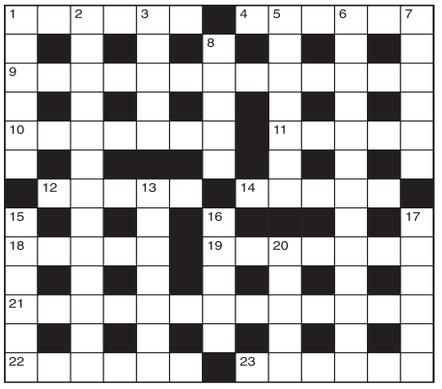
1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25 S
13	26 I

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
A	T	C	N	W	P	F	R	M	K	S	V	O
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
I	Y	J	B	E	Q	X	L	D	H	G	Z	U

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Nowhere near being unapproachable (6)
4. Fits and starts (6)
9. A seat not in sun provided in a moment (13)
10. One would feel put out to be treated so (7)
11. Leaps into indiscretion (5)
12. Support the employees (5)
14. Written in a lofty pedantic style (5)
18. Free from fault (5)
19. Assimilates summaries (7)
21. A refreshing movement in the air (7,6)
22. Pete gets round it, being small (6)
23. Stays to give personal support (6)

Down

1. Was abusive, yet guarded? (6)
2. Sent the application off too late to get the appointment? (6,3,4)
3. It's drunk to a saint (5)
5. Fine kick on the football field (7)
6. The ultimate in intelligence (4-5,4)
7. She won't be the only child in the ward (6)
8. Room could easily become dusty (5)
13. His fancies rarely last (7)
15. Domestic storm centre (3-3)
16. Present day maxim (5)
17. Rising, like foreign currency (6)
20. Film actress in the dress circle (5)

Quick Clues:

Across

1. Ecstasy (6)
4. Harvested (6)
9. Refilling (13)
10. Stupid (7)
11. Necessarily (5)
12. Collier (5)
14. Deserve (5)
18. Cook (5)
19. Atrocious act (7)
21. Sparkling (13)
22. Vocalist (6)
23. Dive (6)

Down

1. Lethargic (6)
2. Enlargement (13)
3. Coffer (5)
5. Add to (7)
6. Forethought (13)
7. Hate (6)
8. Flinch (5)
13. Give right to (7)
15. Emergency (6)
16. Shed feathers (5)
17. Alliance (6)
20. Track (5)

Sudoku

			6		5		1	
	5	1	2	3		7		
6		8					2	3
9			4			2		
		4		2		3		
	1	3			6			4
	2					1		5
		7		5	9	8		
	4		7					9

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

2	3	9	6	4	8	5	7	1
5	8	7	2	3	1	4	6	9
1	6	4	9	7	5	2	8	3
8	4	2	5	1	7	3	9	6
3	1	6	8	2	9	7	4	5
9	7	5	4	6	3	8	1	2
6	2	3	7	9	4	1	5	8
4	9	8	1	5	2	6	3	7
7	5	1	3	8	6	9	2	4

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Pitch and toss; 7 Towns; 8 Alone; 9 Tot; 10 Sleep well; 11 Errata; 12 Detain; 15 Entertain; 17 Eli; 18 Attic; 19 Knelt; 21 Red letter day. Down: 1 Polythene bag; 2 How; 3 Nested; 4 Trample on; 5 Score; 6 Well on his way; 7 Tutor; 10 Satirical; 13 Agent; 14 Packet; 16 Tithe; 20 Eve. QUICK - Across: 1 Circumstance; 7 Tenor; 8 Robin; 9 Eye; 10 Emergence; 11 Putrid; 12 Stress; 15 Unsettled; 17 Tin; 18 Union; 19 Glory; 21 Invertebrate. Down: 1 Contemptuous; 2 Urn; 3 Street; 4 Abrogated; 5 Cabin; 6 Unreasonable; 7 Treat; 10 Existence; 13 Entry; 14 Plight; 16 Scion; 20 Orb.

Quiz

1. Which member of Mrs Thatcher's cabinet was a former airline pilot?
2. Which tree's Latin name is Juglans regia?
3. Who plays Woody Allen's wife in Manhattan Murder Mystery?
4. How do we know the rich vitamin B source Saccharomyces cerevisiae?
5. Which organisation was founded by Chad Varah in 1953?
6. By what name is the Fairs Cup now known?
7. What are studied by palaeontologists?
8. Which martial art uses bamboo replicas of samurai swords?
9. Which Scotland Yard detective led the hunt for Ronnie Biggs?
10. Which US state's capital is Springfield?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Starling; 2 Harry S Truman; 3 Harold Pinter; 4 Tours; 5 Elizabeth I; 6 Thrush; 7 Man Ray; 8 Topography; 9 Derek Lewis; 10 Sir Matt Busby.

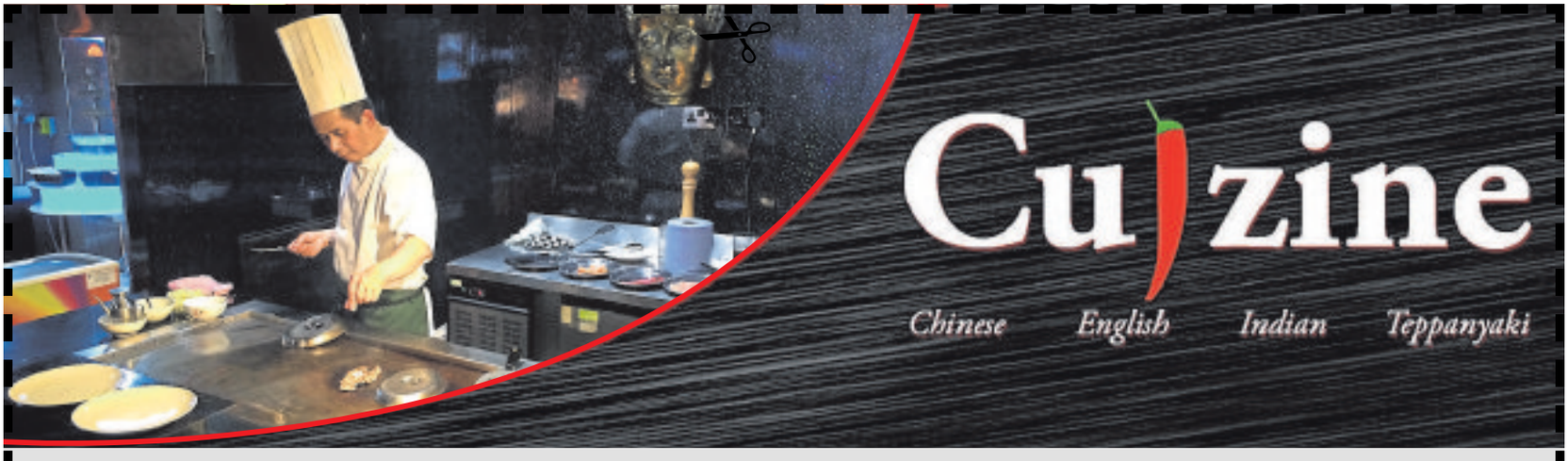
Niner: MONASTERY

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

159 gives a bird,
67284 gives another bird,
1235 gives an animal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9



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Cannock Chronicle

Spot on hot sports coupe

By Graham Breeze

Any car company taking on the performance coupe market just has to get it right first time and Peugeot has done just that with the RCZ GT.

It's the hottest performer ever to break out of Peugeot garages and it has the looks, power and panache of any of the opposition in the performance coupe sector.

Peugeot bosses decided not to meddle too much with the looks of the RCZ which first appeared on our streets in 2009 which is why from the outside you only get a new two-part grill and redesigned claw-like headlights and a double bubble rear window and roof. Not that there's anything wrong with the appearance, the test car crouching purposely on 192 alloys with an active rear spoiler and twin sport exhausts.

The new RCZ is a match for the opposition in performance terms and inside the car demonstrates all the traits of a performance 2+2 sports coupe.

Heated sports front red and black leather seats adjust to give even the tallest front seat occupants a comfortable position and there's a stunning red carbon style dashboard, sports steering wheel and short shift gear lever.

You also get Peugeot Connect Navigation and CD systems and Peugeot Connect USB Box with Bluetooth.

It's a tight fit inside though and you really would not want to be seated in the back.

Any negativity about this car soon disappears once on the open road though. It's a dream to drive, sitting firmly through the tightest bends, with the 1.6 GT emitting a glorious roar when pushed. Steering feedback is glorious thanks to wider tyres and firmer springs and you have to take your hat off to Peugeot designers for providing this superb driving experience.

'The new Peugeot RCZ is without doubt a genuine competitor in the sports coupe sector.'

There's a price range from £22-£32,000 and the THP 200 on test would set you back £26,900 with metallic paint, Media Navigation, roof arches and Hi-Fi system adding another £2,200.

The test car had a top speed of 146mph and would reach 62mph in 7.6 seconds through a six speed manual box and although Peugeot claim combined fuel figures of 42.2mpg you won't get that if you drive the car the way I did for a week.

Boot space is limited as you would expect and there's no room for the golf clubs unless you fold the back seats flat.

On the plus side you can design your own model when buying through a wide range of personalisation options, including 10 alloy wheel designs and 12 interior trims.

The new RCZ gets a visibility pack consisting of automatic wipers and headlamps, electric interior mirror and guide-me-home lighting.

The new RCZ is without doubt a genuine competitor in the sports coupe sector.

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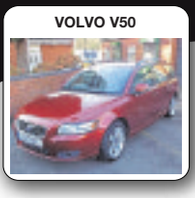
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10	**MEGANE 1.5 DCi Exp** In Red, SH, RCL, AC, £30 road tax, 51,000 miles	£5695
08	**PICASSO 1.6 HDi** Semi Auto VTR + Alloys, AC, CC, SH, 50,000 miles	£5695
09	**FOCUS 1.6 ZETEC** AC, Alloys, HFS, SH, 47,000 miles	£5495
11	**i10 1.2 5-dr.** Alloys, AC, SH, £30 Road Tax, 15,000 miles	£5495
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DRIVETIME

Skoda wins the space race

The new ŠKODA Fabia Estate offers plenty of space for up to five passengers and their luggage even with the car's compact exterior dimensions.

The boot has the largest capacity in its segment at 530 litres (1395 litres with the rear seat folded down). In addition, the third-generation model is more practical than ever with up to 17 Simply Clever solutions, 10 of which are on offer for the first time.

The design of the new car is significantly more emotive than before. Just as with the hatchback, the new ŠKODA Fabia Estate features a modern, sharp design language, dynamic proportions, as well as design elements from the ŠKODA VisionC show car. Precise lines and sharp edges testify to the highest production quality and attention to detail. Crystalline elements and the striking interplay between light and shadow emphasise the strong appearance. The interior has also been completely redesigned, and offers an array of customisation options.

The estate now features innovative safety, comfort and infotainment systems from higher vehicle classes, including the innovative MirrorLink technology, displaying smartphone apps, such as sat-nav, on the infotainment system screen. The SmartGate function is also new. This technology enables data on the vehicle to be displayed and saved on your smartphone via special apps.

The new Fabia Estate consumes up to 17 per cent less fuel than the second-generation model. The most economical version will be the new Fabia Estate GreenLine.

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To celebrate the launch of new Fabia and opening of our brand new showroom at Burntwood

Friday 30th January
6:30pm - 9:00pm
Free food, drinks, entertainment and music
Come and join in the fun!

FANTASTIC SPECIAL OFFERS ON NEW AND USED SKODA

BRAND NEW UNREGISTERED
Fabia 1.2 SE 12v 69PS 5 Door Hatchback
» Brand New » Choice of colours » Spare steel wheel » Metallic paint
» 15" alloy wheels » Air conditioning » Remote central locking

LAST OF RANGE MASSIVE SAVING OF £3555

SPECIAL EDITION
DRIVE AWAY **£8995**

WAS £12,550

Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the Skoda range: Urban 19.6 (14.4) - 68.9 (4.1), Extra Urban 36.2 (7.8) - 4.2 (3.0), Combined 27.7 (10.2) - 83.1 (3.4). CO^2 emissions for the Skoda range 89 - 237g/km.

ONE-OFF COST PRICE DEALS!

2014(64) Rapid Spaceback 1.2 TSi 105PS SE 5 Door
Delivery mileage only, Race Blue metallic
PRICE NEW £16,715

ONE ONLY

SALE PRICE **£12995** SAVING **£3720**

2014(64) Rapid Spaceback 1.6 TDi 90PS SE 5 Door
Delivery mileage only, Corrida Red
PRICE NEW £17,455

ONE ONLY

SALE PRICE **£13995** SAVING **£3460**

STYLE PACK AND EXTRAS INCLUDED SUCH AS PANORAMIC ROOF

2014(64) Roomster 1.2 TSi 86PS SE 5 Door
Delivery mileage only, Silver metallic

ONE ONLY

SALE PRICE **£9995** SAVING **£4140**

2014(64) Rapid 1.6 TDi 105PS E 5 Door
Delivery mileage only,
PRICE NEW £17,145

ONE ONLY

SALE PRICE **£11995** SAVING **£5150**

MANY MORE GREAT OFFERS ON DELIVERY MILEAGE MODELS

2014(64) Fabia 1.6 TDi 105PS SE 5 Door
Delivery mileage only, Choice of Two
PRICE NEW £13,615

TWO ONLY

SALE PRICE **£11495** SAVING **£2120**

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*Subject to status

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2012 12 DS3 1.6 D-STYLE+
3-Dr aircon alloy wheels in white with black roof look only 18382 miles
£9,499

2009 59 FIESTA 1.6TDCI DIESEL TITANIUM
5-Dr alloy wheels aircon elctrics pack look only 51762 MILES
£6,999

2009 09 QASHQAI 1.6 ACENTA
5-Dr aircon alloy wheel electrcis pack very clean
£7,499

AUDI
2003 53 **TT QUATTRO 180 BHP** 3-Dr COUPE black leather seats alloy wheels aircon excellent condtion with history £4,499

BMW
2009 09 **318I 2.0 ES TOURING ESTATE** 5-Dr alloy wheels aircon privacy glass with history £7,999
2002 52 **325TI SPORT COMPACT** 3-Dr leather seats alloy wheels aircon only 83000 miles £2,999

CITROEN
2013 63 **DS3 1.6 D-STYLE+ CABRIOLET** 2-Dr aircon alloy wheels in white with purple roof look only 7956 miles £10,999
2012 12 **DS3 1.6 D-STYLE+** 3-Dr aircon alloy wheels in white with black roof look only 18382 miles £9,499
2009 59 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 49659 miles £5,999
2009 09 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 69185 miles £5,999
2008 58 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 44500 miles £6,499
2008 08 **PICASSO DESIRE 1.6 HDI DIESEL 5-Dr MPV** aircon electric windows central locking 61024 miles FSH £3,999

CHEVROLET
2007 57 **LACETTI 1.6 SX** 5-Dr alloys aircon electrics pack only 55926 miles £2,999

FIAT
2010 59 **500 POP 1.2** 3-Dr electric windows central locking & mirrors One owner look only 7458 miles FSH £6,499
2011 61 **PUNTO EVO 1.4 GP** 5-Dr alloy wheels aircon with history only 16998 miles 1 owner £6,499

FORD
2006 06 **KA 1.3 COLLECTION** 3-Dr colour coded bumpers low miles electric windows £2,499
2009 59 **FIESTA 1.6TDCI DIESEL TITANIUM** 5-Dr alloy wheels aircon elctrics pack look only 51762 MILES £6,999
2010 10 **FOCUS ZETEC 1.6 100** 5-Dr alloy wheels aircon heated front screen only 35000 miles £6,999

HONDA
2003 03 **CRV-I VTEC SE SPORT 2.0** 5-Dr aircon alloys electrics pack value for money 4x4 ..... £2,999

JAGUAR
2008 58 **X-TYPE 2.0D DIESEL S** 4-Dr new model alloy wheel aircon excellent mpg and cheap RFL with history £6,999

KIA
2006 06 **SORENTO 2.5 CRDI XS DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr aircon alloys leather seats 2500KG tow capacity £7,499

MAZDA
2010 10 **MAZDA 3 1.6 TS2** 5-Dr electric blue aircon alloys wheels needs viewing with history £6,499

MERCEDES
2009 59 **A160 1.5 BLUE EFFICIENCY SE** 5-Dr aircon electrics pack low Co2 level cheap RFL only 38142 miles £5,999
2006 55 **A150 1.5 ELEGANCE SE AUTOMATIC CVT** 5-Dr aircon alloys history only 62000 miles £4,499
2008 08 **C320 ELEGANCE 3.0 CDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 4-Dr Black leather seats aircon alloys only 54579 miles £11,499
2008 08 **CLK 280 3.0SPORT CABRIOLET AUTOMATIC** 2-Dr leather aircon alloys COMMAND NAV only 34230 miles £12,999

MINI
2010 10 **MINI COOPER 1.6 CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloys aircon 6 disc cd player in White only 28845 miles £9,999
2009 59 **MINI COOPER CLUBMAN 1.6 ESTATE** aircon alloys only 41862 miles with history £7,999
2007 57 **MINI ONE 1.4** 3-Dr facelift model alloys aircon pepper pack union jack side indicators only 51670 miles £5,999
2003 03 **MINI COOPER 1.6** 3-Dr alloy wheels electrics pack union jack roof, real eye catcher FSH £3,999

MITSUBISHI
2009 09 **COLT CZ2 1.3** 3-Dr alloy wheels aircon electric windows low insurance look only 36000 miles £3,999

NISSAN
2009 09 **QASHQAI 1.6 ACENTA** 5-Dr aircon alloy wheel electrcis pack very clean £7,499

PEUGEOT
2010 60 **107 MILLESIM** 1.0 3-Dr alloy wheels aircon cheap RFI =£30 for year look only 31000 miles £4,499
2004 54 **206 QUICKSILVER CC 1.6 COUPE CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloy wheels aircon only 70000 miles £2,699
2010 10 **308 SPORT 1.6 HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr alloys aircon electrics windows with histoy only 53154 miles £5,999
2009 59 **407 SPORT 2.0 HDI 140 DIESEL SW 5-Dr ESTATE** part leather SATNAV alloys aircon only 32344 miles £7,999
2008 08 **4007 GT 2.2HDI DIESEL 5-Dr 7 SEATER** aircon alloys full leather trim excellent towcar switchable 4x4 ..... £7,999
2010 60 **5008 EXCLUSIVE 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr MPV 7 SEATER aircon alloys only 11030 miles !! £10,999

RENAULT
2011 11 **CLIO 1.2 DYNAMIQUE TOM TOM** 5-Dr alloys aircon Satnav electrics pack £4,499
2007 07 **CLIO 1.2 EXPRESSION** 3-Dr alloys aircon electrics pack only 55679 miles £3,499
2009 09 **MEGANE DYNAMIQUE 1.5 DCI DIESEL** 5-Dr alloys aircon electrics pack only 43762 miles E30 RFL £6,499
2005 05 **MEGANE DYNAMIQUE 1.9 DCI 120 DIESEL COUPE CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloys aircon only 73000 miles £2,999
2010 10 **GRAND SCENIC 1.4 TCE I-MUSIC** 5-Dr 7 seater electrics windows central locking £6,999
2003 53 **SCENIC 1.6 EXPRESSION** 5-Dr central locking electrics windows value for money very clean £1,999
2012 61 **LAGUNA 1.5 DCI DIESEL GT LINE** 5-Dr TOM TOM SATNAV part leather aircon alloys newer model! £6,999
2009 59 **LAGUNA 2.0 DCI DIESEL GT 180 COUPE** 2-Dr leather aircon alloys only 62327 miles rare coupe! £7,999

SMART
2009 09 **FORTWO PASSION 800 CDI DIESEL AUTO** 3-Dr alloys aircon panoramic roof only 46617 miles rfl=£nil £4,499

SUZUKI
2055 55 **SWIFT 1.3 GL** 5-Dr electric blue electrics pack eye catcher low insurance group £3,499

TOYOTA
2011 61 **AURIUS EDITION 1.3 VVTI** 5-Dr aircon alloys in White only one owner only 18000 miles £7,999

VAUXHALL
2010 10 **ASTRA 1.6 SRI** 3-Dr alloys aircon electrics pack look only 21813 miles £6,499
2010 10 **ASTRA 1.6 SRI** 5-Dr alloys aircon electrcis pack look needs viewing eye catcher £5,999
2010 10 **ASTRA 1.4 ACTIVE** 5-Dr aircon electrics pack look only 38444 miles low insurance group £5,999
2006 06 **ASTRA 1.6 DESIGN TWINPORT** 5-Dr aircon alloys electrics pack very clean needs viewing £3,499
2002 52 **ASTRA 1.8 CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloys aircon and leather seats look only 68000 miles excellent condition £2,499
2012 62 **CORSA 1.0 S ECOFLEX** 3-Dr aircon electrics pack look only 13177 miles £5,999
2012 12 **CORSA 1.2 ACTIVE AC** 3- Dr aircon alloy wheels electrics pack rear spoiler low insurance 34267 miles £5,999
2011 11 **CORSA 1.2 SXI** 5-Dr aircon alloy wheels with privacy glass look only 23919 miles £5,999
2010 10 **CORSA 1.4 SRI** 3-Dr body kit rear spolier side skirts aircon alloys 1 lady owner need viewing £5,999
2008 58 **CORSA 1.2 CLUB** 5- Dr aircon electrics windows low insurance £3,999
2011 61 **MERIVA 1.4T EXCITE** 5-Dr aircon alloy wheels electrics pack only 49361 miles £6,499
2012 12 **INSIGNIA 2.0 CDTI 160 DIESEL AUTOMATIC EXCLUSIVE** 5-Dr alloy wheel aircon only 15808 miles £10,999
2013 13 **ZAFIRA 1.6 EXCLUSIVE** 5-Dr 7 seater aircon electrics pack only one owner 24808 miles £8,499

VOLKSWAGEN
2004 54 **BEETLE 1.6 CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr aircon electrics pack just been serviced only 55544 miles £4,999
2009 59 **GOLF SE 1.6 TDI BLUEMOTION DIESEL** 5-Dr aircon alloy wheels with history E20 Road Tax for year!! £7,999
2008 58 **GOLF GT 170 1.4 TSI** 5-Dr leather seats alloys aircon only 45114 miles with history needs viewing £8,499
2004 53 **GOLF 1.6 MATCH** 5-Dr electric windows very clean example needs viewing £2,499
2009 09 **PASSAT GT 140 CC 2.0 TDI DIESEL** 4-Dr COUPE aircon alloys 2 owners with history rare coupe £8,999
2006 56 **PASSAT S 140 HP 2.0 TDI DIESEL** 4-Dr aircon alloys electrics pack with history £4,499

AUTOMATICS
2009 09 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 69185 miles £5,999
2008 58 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 44500 miles £6,499
2006 06 **SORENTO 2.5 CRDI XS DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr aircon alloys leather seats 2500KG tow capacity £7,499
2008 08 **C320 ELEGANCE 3.0 CDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 4-Dr Black leather seats aircon alloys only 54579 miles £11,499
2008 08 **CLK 280 3.0 SPORT CABRIOLET AUTOMATIC** 2-Dr leather aircon alloys COMMAND NAV only 34230 miles £12,999
2006 55 **A150 1.5 ELEGANCE SE AUTOMATIC CVT** 5-Dr aircon alloys history only 62000 miles £4,499
2010 60 **5008 EXCLUSIVE 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr MPV 7 SEATER aircon alloys only 11030 miles!! £10,999
2009 09 **FORTWO PASSION 800 CDI DIESEL AUTO** 3-Dr alloys aircon panoramic roof only 46617 miles rfl £nil £4,499
2012 12 **INSIGNIA 2.0 CDTI 160 DIESEL AUTOMATIC EXCLUSIVE** 5-Dr alloy wheel aircon only 15808 miles £10,999

CABRIOLETS, CONVERTIBLES & TWIN TOPS
2013 63 **DS3 1.6 D-STYLE+ CABRIOLET** 2-Dr aircon alloy wheels in white with purple roof look only 7956 miles £10,999
2010 10 **MINI COOPER 1.6 CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloys aircon 6 disc cd player in White only 28845 miles £9,999
2008 08 **CLK 280 3.0 SPORT CABRIOLET AUTOMATIC** 2-Dr leather aircon alloys COMMAND NAV only 34230 miles £12,999
2004 54 **206 QUICKSILVER CC 1.6 COUPE CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloy wheels aircon only 70000 miles £2,699
2005 05 **MEGANE DYNAMIQUE 1.9 DCI 120 DIESEL COUPE CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloys aircon only 73000 miles £2,999
2002 52 **ASTRA 1.8 CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloys aircon and leather seats look only 68000 miles excellent condition £2,499
2004 54 **BETTLE 1.6 CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr aircon electrics pack just been serviced only 55544 miles £4,999

4x4's & 4x2's
2003 03 **CRV-I VTEC SE SPORT 2.0** 5-Dr aircon alloys electrics pack value for money 4x4 ..... £2,999
2006 06 **SORENTO 2.5 CRDI XS DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr aircon alloys leather seats 2500KG tow capacity £7,499
2009 09 **QASHQAI 1.6 ACENTA** 5-Dr aircon alloy wheel electrcis pack very clean £7,499
2008 08 **4007 GT 2.2HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr 7 SEATER aircon alloys full leather trim excellent towcar switchable 4x4 ..... £7,999

PEOPLE CARRIERS & MPV'S & ESTATE CARS
2009 09 **318I 2.0 ES TOURING ESTATE** 5-Dr alloy wheels aircon privacy glass rare estate car £7,999
2009 59 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 49659 miles £6,999
2009 09 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 69185 miles £5,999
2008 58 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 44500 miles £6,499
2008 08 **PICASSO DESIRE 1.6 HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr MPV aircon electric windows central locking 61024 miles FSH £3,999
2009 59 **MINI COOPER CLUBMAN 1.6 ESTATE** aircon alloys only 41862 miles with history £7,999
2009 59 **407 SPORT 2.0 HDI 140 DIESEL SW** 5-Dr ESTATE part leather SATNAV alloys aircon only 32344 miles £7,999
2008 08 **4007 GT 2.2HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr 7 SEATER aircon alloys full leather trim excellent towcar switchable 4x4 ..... £7,999
2010 60 **5008 EXCLUSIVE 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr MPV 7 SEATER aircon alloys only 11030 miles !! £10,999
2010 10 **GRAND SCENIC 1.4 TCE I-MUSIC** 5-Dr 7 seater electrics windows central locking £6,999
2003 53 **SCENIC 1.6 EXPRESSION** 5-Dr central locking electrics windows value for money very clean £1,999
2013 13 **ZAFIRA 1.6 EXCLUSIVE** 5-Dr 7 seater aircon electrics pack only one owner 24808 miles £8,499

DIESELS
2009 09 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 69185 miles £5,999
2008 58 **C4 GRAND PICASSO VTR PLUS 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr 7 seats alloys aircon only 44500 miles £6,499
2008 08 **PICASSO DESIRE 1.6 HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr MPV aircon electric windows central locking 61024 miles FSH £3,999
2009 59 **FIESTA 1.6TDCI DIESEL TITANIUM** 5-Dr alloy wheels aircon elctrics pack look only 51762 MILES £6,999
2008 58 **X-TYPE 2.0D DIESEL S** 4-Dr new model alloy wheel aircon excellent mpg and cheap RFL with history £6,999
2006 06 **SORENTO 2.5 CRDI XS DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr aircon alloys leather seats 2500KG tow capacity £7,499
2008 08 **C320 ELEGANCE 3.0 CDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 4-Dr Black leather seats aircon alloys only 54579 miles £11,499
2010 10 **308 SPORT 1.6 HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr alloys aircon electrics windows with histoy only 53154 miles £5,999
2009 59 **407 SPORT 2.0 HDI 140 DIESEL SW** 5-Dr ESTATE part leather SATNAV alloys aircon only 32344 miles £7,999
2008 08 **4007 GT 2.2HDI DIESEL** 5-Dr 7 SEATER aircon alloys full leather trim excellent towcar switchable 4x4 ..... £7,999
2010 60 **5008 EXCLUSIVE 1.6 HDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC** 5-Dr MPV 7 SEATER aircon alloys only 11030 miles !! £10,999
2009 09 **MEGANE DYNAMIQUE 1.5 DCI DIESEL** 5-Dr alloys aircon electrics pack only 43762 miles E30 RFL £6,499
2005 05 **MEGANE DYNAMIQUE 1.9 DCI 120 DIESEL COUPE CONVERTIBLE** 2-Dr alloys aircon only 73000 miles £2,999
2012 61 **LAGUNA 1.5 DCI DIESEL GT LINE** 5-Dr TOM TOM SATNAV part leather aircon alloys newer model! £6,999
2009 59 **LAGUNA 2.0 DCI DIESEL GT 180 COUPE** 2-Dr leather aircon alloys only 62327 miles rare coupe! £7,999
2009 09 **FORTWO PASSION 800 CDI DIESEL AUTO** 3-Dr alloys aircon panoramic roof only 46617 miles rfl £nil £4,499
2012 12 **INSIGNIA 2.0 CDTI 160 DIESEL AUTOMATIC EXCLUSIVE** 5-Dr alloy wheel aircon only 15808 miles £10,999
2009 59 **GOLF SE 1.6 TDI BLUEMOTION DIESEL** 5-Dr aircon alloy wheels with history E20 Road Tax for year!! £7,999
2009 09 **PASSAT GT 140 CC 2.0 TDI DIESEL** 4-Dr COUPE aircon alloys 2 owners with history rare coupe £8,999
2006 56 **PASSAT S 140 HP 2.0 TDI DIESEL** 4-Dr aircon alloys electrics pack with history £4,499

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2005 05 **HYUNDAI GETZ 1.3 GSI** 3-Dr LONG MOT ONLY TWO OWNERS WITH HISTORY £1,290
2004 04 **MAZDA 6 1.8 TS** 5 DR INC NEW MOT £990
2002 02 **FORD FOCUS 1.8 ZETEC** 5-DR MOT TILL JULY 2015 ..... £999
2000 X **CITROEN SAXO 1.1 FORTE** 3-Dr MOT TILL JUNE 2015 IDEAL FIRST CAR £690

2008 08 C320 ELEGANCE 3.0 CDI DIESEL AUTOMATIC
4-Dr Black leather seats aircon alloys only 54579 miles
£11,499

2010 10 CORSA 1.4 SRI
3-Dr body kit rear spolier side skirts aircon alloys 1 lady owner need viewing
£5,999

2010 10 MAZDA 3 1.6 TS2
5-Dr electric blue aircon alloys wheels needs viewing with history
£6,499

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Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) Highest: FORD Kuga 1.5 EcoBoost (182PS), A6-AWD : urban 30.4 (9.3), extra urban 45.6 (6.2), combined 38.2 (7.4). Official CO_2 emissions 171g/km. Lowest: FORD Focus 1.6 Duratorq TDCi 88g Stop-Start (105PS) 5 Door (+DPF), M6: urban 72.4 (3.9), extra urban 91.1 (3.1), combined 83.1 (3.4). Official CO_2 emissions 88g/km.
†Please consult dealer for full terms and conditions of Motability offers.

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FIAT PUNTO 01 Reg, 5 door, Green, 38,000 miles, 2 owners, 12 months MOT.....£650

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£6m Land Rover outlet opens

Stafford Land Rover's state of the art new dealership is complete and has opened its doors to the public.

The £6 million showroom, just off junction 14 of the M6, is one of the first Land Rover concept showrooms in the country.

Construction workers broke ground at the three acre site back in April.

This week Darren Poole, dealer principal at Stafford Land Rover, said everyone was looking forward to the start of a new era.

Darren said: "Throughout the construction process, we had a huge amount of interest in the new site, and it is good to be able to finally answer the many questions from curious customers. The new site is truly state of the art, and is set to deliver a customer experience like never before with total brand consistency alongside exceptional customer service and cutting edge technology."

Investment

Stafford Land Rover is part of the family owned Swansway Group, and the £6m investment is the biggest ever by the group – a strong demonstration of its confidence in the Land Rover brand.

"This is such an exciting time for Stafford Land Rover.

"We will be creating jobs as we strengthen our sales team and take on new apprentice technicians to work in our bigger showroom and our hi-tech workshop," said Darren, who has led the team at the Astonfields Road dealership since the Swansway Group bought Stafford Land Rover in July 2012.

An official opening ceremony will be held at the dealership on January 22.

Prime Point 14 lies immediately next to the M6 at Junction 14 and forms part of a strategic greenfield site of 128 acres (51.82ha) with mixed use consent.

Crewe based Swansway Group is a family owned and run business that has been in the motor trade for more than 48 years, and currently represents nine different brands.

The group has appeared in The Sunday Times Best Companies to Work for Top 100 for the last four years.

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Group 4	(4&6cyl) Performance Cars	£132.95
Group 5	4x4's (Freelander Etc)	£142.95

These prices Include Spark Plugs up to £8.00 Additional cost may be incurred

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New wheels at racetrack

Uttoxeter Racecourse and W R Davies Toyota of Stafford have set out on yet a further four year partnership, with the Staffordshire venue taking delivery of a brand new twin cab Toyota Hilux.

The course retains two leased and fully dual-branded Hilux 4x4 trucks, with an additional Toyota vehicle supplied by W R Davies on racedays.

The third vehicle is used to transport the doctors and vets that track each race to ensure medical support is on hand should it be needed.

Charlie Moore, clerk of the course at Uttoxeter Racecourse said "The Toyota Hilux trucks are really versatile and easy to drive, without being too heavy or cumbersome.

"Our ground staff really appreciate the use of the vehicles which have proved to be extremely reliable and hardwearing. They take great pride in having such 'new and shiny' vehicles to assist them in their busy work schedule both on the course and off-site. Not that there has been much need, but if we need anything from WR Davies it is sorted immediately and Gary Castledine makes us feel like a valued client and partner."

Gary Castledine, Business Centre Manager for W R Davies Toyota said, "W R Davies Toyota Stafford are delighted to continue the partnership with Uttoxeter Racing & Events and hope the next four years will be as successful as the last four."

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The above fuel consumption figures are based on an EU test for comparative purposes only and may not reflect real driving results. *Model shown: Celerio SZ4 available from £8,999 (metallic paint available at £415). Celerio range: Celerio 1.0 SZ3 Manual available at £7,999 to Celerio 1.0 SZ4 Manual available at £8,999. On the road price valid from 1st December 2014 to 31st March 2015. For full details contact your local participating Suzuki Dealer. All prices and specifications correct at time of going to print.

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DRIVETIME

Hyundai is hitting the big time with all-new i20

By David Banner

The small car class is full of star performers but the i20 might just have aced its latest exams. The i10 is a cracker, and the all-new i20 is every bit as good. Everything is better than before, from the suspension to the seats, and from the high-tensile steel body to the innovative sat-nav integration solution.

The Korean firm has worked on a premium feel, and it goes way beyond a few soft-touch surfaces on the dashboard. Quality engineering seeps from the i20's every panel, and it shines through in a genuinely superb package.

It's a striking thing, thanks to second-generation 'Fluidic Sculpture' design and neat, balanced proportions. Choose the smaller 15-inch wheels and you might regret it, though.

Older

Until recently Hyundai's image has centred on reliability and quality, backing it up with a five-year warranty, thus appealing to older buyers.

The hawkish looks of the new i20 are designed to broaden that appeal to younger buyers, and it works. This is a genuinely desirable car.

A 301-litre boot brings up the rear, and it's evenly shaped to give maximum chance of fitting different sizes of bags in.

What's most impressive is how much passenger room there is.

Four real-life British adults will fit in with absolutely no complaints – and they'll all be comfortable, too.

All the engines are good, but arguably the 1.2-litre petrol is the sweetest. It revs keenly, responds quickly and is exceptionally quiet most of the time. In town it's a gem, and while the 1.4 is pokier, it's more expensive.

Thanks to quality damping, the i20 feels marvellously mature and stable, whether it's tasked with a motorway or a series of tight bends.

The steering on petrol models is surprisingly good, with a lovely, direct feel that weights up quickly but consistently. It's unexpectedly good to drive even if you drive it like you stole it.

Words of caution: avoid the ancient four-speed automatic gearbox. Noah had one before he built the Ark, and he didn't like it very much either.

Not to mention the awful things it does to the fuel consumption and road tax liability.

Price

Exterior wind blast and air pressure changes can also have the effect of creating what sounds like wind noise at higher speeds, but is actually swirling air in the pipes. Turn the fan off and it disappears.

There's a fair price jump from the loss-leading entry-level model to those that you'd actually buy.

SE trim has most of the bases covered, but lots of extra comfort and luxury tech makes

Premium worth the stretch. Pair it with the 1.2 petrol engine and you're onto a winner.

Hyundai is still a little behind the times on engine tech, but it's set to bring out a turbocharged 1.0-litre petrol in the i20 next year.

At the moment only the special eco-diesel falls below the 100g/km CO2 free road tax threshold, but the new engine will join it – for a price.

This is a perfect all-rounder for people who want style, maturity and space without the price tag. There's so much to like that only getting hands-on with it will do it justice, and when buyers can have something that looks this good, feels so well-built and drives as well as it does, there's precious little reason to look elsewhere.

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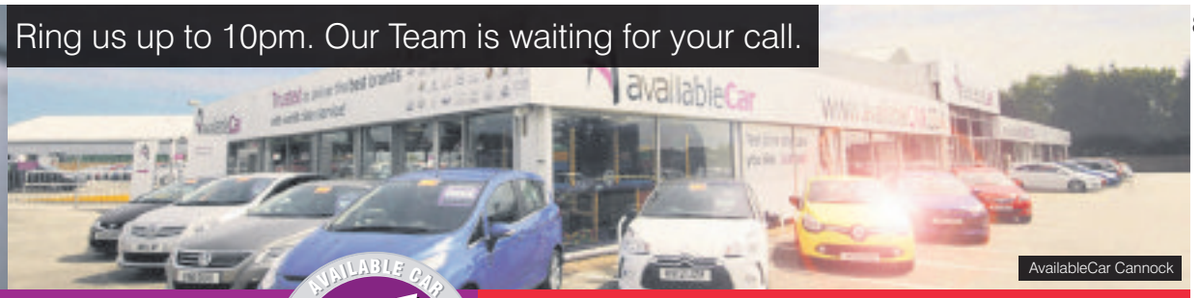

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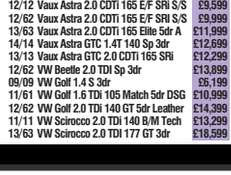
10 Plate



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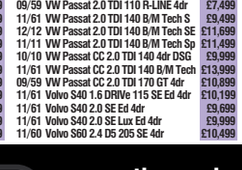
09 Plate



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61 Plate

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08 Plate

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12/62 Ford Fiesta 1.25 Edge 5dr

Vauxhall's supermini is looking good with new styling

By David Banner

Vauxhall has thoroughly revised its popular Corsa supermini, complete with cleaner, greener engines and a look influenced by the fashionable Adam.

The revisions to the Corsa are extensive, and while Vauxhall's engineers have retained the previous car's basic platform, much work has been done on the way the car drives as well as how it looks.

Visually the Corsa's been influenced by the funky Adam, while there's been an increased focus on boosting the green credentials of the car's engine range. And to improve the 'big car' feel, there's now a wealth of added value safety kit and creature comforts available.

It's hardly a surprise that the new Corsa looks a little bit like the Adam. From the front at least, Vauxhall's mainstream supermini now boasts a little more character and is easier to spot in the supermarket car park.

And being Vauxhall's volume-selling car, it's got to perform for a wide variety of customers, be they private buyers or company car users.

Revised

As such, the major selling point is low running costs, thanks in part to new and revised engines, plus a greener approach to motoring.

In supermini terms the Corsa offers a good level of cabin space and practicality. It's available in three and five-door form, and there's ample boot space for a car of this size. And for a car that has to work for a wide variety of users, cabin oddment storage space is more than enough for mobile phones, drinks, maps and the like.

Previously the Corsa was rarely top of keen drivers' shopping lists, but Vauxhall's engineers have done a good job of closing the gap on the likes of Ford's Fiesta.

A thorough overhaul of suspension and steering elements has resulted in a more engaging experience, while refinement and the ability to cope with poorly surfaced roads have also been greatly improved.

Vauxhall has also spent a lot of time improving the Corsa's engine range, with the result being a greater focus on economy and ease of driving.

Some existing units have been improved, such as the firm's 1.3-litre diesel units – now offering sub-100g/km CO2 figures, while an all-new 1.0-litre, three-cylinder petrol motor has been introduced in two states of tune: 90 and 115 horsepower. The latter is pleasantly smooth and quiet, yet punches well above its weight performance-wise.

Heated

Vauxhall's not been shy in adding a considerable amount of kit, with the highlights being a heated windscreen, the choice of heated seats and steering wheel, plus advanced safety kit and a high-end infotainment system previously only found on more expensive cars higher up the Vauxhall food chain. Factor in the greener and more economical engines, plus the ability to save money at the pumps and reduce the amount you give to the taxman each year, and the Corsa's value-for-money status is pleasingly more attractive than before.

The Corsa has always appealed to a wide audience, and it's likely to be the same with this new model. Private buyers form a significant proportion of the market and there's no shortage of choice when it comes to engine and trim combinations. Offering both three and five-door bodystyles does much to further boost its chances in a crowded market.

Vauxhall hasn't forgotten business users either. Low CO2 rated engines and fleet-specific trim levels should make the business of buying company cars an easy one.

This car summed up in a single word: Dependable.

If this car was: An item clothing, it would be a comfortable pair of shoes.

TESTED

Vauxhall Corsa 1.0i Excite five-door £14,695
Engine: 1.0-litre petrol unit producing 115bhp and 122lb/ft of torque
Transmission: Six-speed manual driving the front wheels
Performance: Top speed 121mph, 0-62mph in 10.3 seconds
Economy: 57.6mpg combined
Emissions: 115g/km of CO2

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Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) Highest: FORD Kuga 2.0 TDCi (150PS), M6: Urban 52.3 (5.4), Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3), Combined 60.1 (4.7), CO_2 emissions 122(g/km). Lowest: All New Focus 1.0 EcoBoost (100PS) With Stop/Start - 5 Door, M5: urban 49.6 (5.7), extra urban 72.4 (3.9), combined 61.4 (4.6). Official CO_2 emission 105g/km. *Finance subject to status. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Freepost Ford Credit. Facility fee (where applicable) is payable with first payment. Deposit allowance only available when financed with Ford Credit. Purchase fee (where applicable) is payable with GMFV if you wish to own the vehicle at the end of the agreement. Terms and conditions apply, please ask for full details. Vehicles shown for illustration purposes only. Vehicles must be registered by 31st January 2015 to qualify for these offers. This supersedes all previously advertised manufacturer's promotions. Information correct at time of publication E&OE.

With prices like these, you can't ignore the Dacia Logan

By Bob Hickman

The price of the Dacia Logan estate car, starts at a staggeringly low £6,995 on the road, I repeat £6.995, £5 under £7,000 for an estate car, this is one of the reasons Dacia has been one of the explosive success stories in 2014 in car sales.

My particular derivative was the Laureate – this is the top specification vehicle and has a price of £10,795. In this day and age this is a staggeringly low figure and when you consider what you get for the money, it has to be worth a second look.

It is built in Romania and is a joint venture of the mighty Renault and Nissan Empire. The Dacia fulfills for those people paying with their own money all your motoring needs. Yes, we can accept there may one or two rough edges and it may not have the ambiance of the more expensive vehicles, but hey who cares when you are paying with your own money. This is important.

Who can decry a vehicle that has smart alloy wheels, body coloured co-ordinated bumpers, and door handles. Chrome appears all over the vehicle, and this vehicle is a full five-seater.

It also has an on-board seven-function computer. All this remember at that headline price at the beginning of the article.

Externally the car looks quite impressive – the front fog lamps and roof give a purposeful look. The rear boot area has a cover to keep goods secure and away from the miscreants that shouldn't be looking and all the rear glass has a slight tint to it.

It is difficult to understand in this day and age how other manufacturers can justify some of the exhorbitant prices when you look at what you are actually getting with the whole of the Dacia range.

The Logan is not a vehicle that has been overlooked when it comes to safety features. It has anti-lock brakes and emergency brake assist, the rear doors have child protection devices, and should you drive away with a door not quite fastened a visible warning system sounds.

There is a driver's air bag and front and side air bags. In addition the front passenger airbag can be de-activated to ensure junior's seat is fitted correctly.

From a driving perspective to sit in the cabin was not overtly unpleasant, an abundance of grey plastic with a much lighter grey roof lifted the vehicle and gave a feeling of space.

Shoulder, leg and headroom for all occupants were exceptionally good.

Transformation

The dashboard was a disappointment in so far that in daylight it was difficult to read the silver letters on the black background, but what a transformation when it was dark and you switch the lights on. The dashboard now glows a warm orange and the superb graphics are now easily understood.

The seven-function on-board computer, which you normally associate with more expensive cars, telling you how much fuel you have left, what your mpg is, and two various trip meters, give you an indication of the mileage that you have travelled.

The heater controls are simplistic in their central console location as were the controls for the front windows. The rear electric windows switches were hidden away and difficult to find.

The engine is the brilliant 1.5-litre diesel that Renault share with Nissan, this produces 90 bhp, sufficient to give excellent miles to the gallon and adequate performance in most circumstances.

During my time with the Dacia I achieved 60 mpg over 500 miles of varied driving conditions on a mixture of all types of roads. With CO emissions at 99 and excise duty in Group A, this is a seriously cheap car to run.

There was one huge disappointment however, and that was the gear ratios. Dacia has a five-speed manual gearbox. In the week previous I had driven the brilliant Renault Captur with exactly the same engine and a five-speed gearbox, but someone at Dacia needs to be remonstrated with, because the gear ratios chosen spoilt the vehicle. Fifth gear is a complete and utter no-go area unless you are travelling at 50 mph and above, even fourth gear struggled at 30 mph. The engineers have designed the Dacia for maximum mpg but totally overlooked driver comfort and this was a very sad feature.

All Dacia's come with a three-year or 60,000 miles warranty and for the pricing structure they just have to be worth a second glance.

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Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. *Under current DVLA regulations there is no charge for Vehicle Excise Duty in the first year of registration and every subsequent year. Vehicle Excise Duty rates are reviewed annually by the government and are subject to change.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). New Corsa Limited Edition 1.2, 3dr: Urban: 42.2 (6.7), Extra-urban: 61.4 (4.6), Combined: 52.3 (5.4). CO_2 emissions: 126g/km.#

Personal contract hire offer on New Corsa Limited Edition 1.2, 3dr, red on orders received between 1 January 2015 and 1 April 2015, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £2,533, then 23 monthly rentals of £149. Excess annual miles over 8000 charged at 6.63ppm. Excess charges also apply if you breach manufacturer servicing or maintenance guidelines or if the car exceeds BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age/mileage when it is returned to Vauxhall Leasing. Package includes Road Fund Licence and Vauxhall Assistance. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. Prices and details are subject to change without notice. You will not own the car. For full specification and T&Cs contact your local Retailer. ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing. BS16 3JA. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. ^Applicants must hold a full, valid driving licence and be 18 years or over to qualify for a test drive. #MPG figures are official test data and may not reflect real driving results.

Padding that will save you a fortune in dent fixing

By Ian Donaldson

"Stop it," the Navigator-in-Chief said in an urgent stage whisper, "they'll think you've gone mad." She may be right. The setting was a busy supermarket car park and the action which sparked the demand to stop immediately was me gently banging a shopping trolley into the side of the car you see pictured here.

Not as crazy as it sounds. You'll have noticed the stand out visual feature of this interesting new hatchback from Citroen; the plastic padding down the sides and around the lights, front and rear.

Called Airbumps, they're intended to both make the C4 Cactus stand out from the crowd (choose from four colours) and take a bit of light trolley bashing without needing a trip to the paint shop.

I'd say they work on both counts.

They are also intended to show that Citroen – once famous for its quirky take on family motoring – is getting back to basics with a car that includes practical features but ditches anything that adds to cost or mere complication.

Those Airbumps are the most obviously practical feature, but hop aboard and you'll find a big glovebox on top of the dash (possible thanks to airbags now mounted in the roof), generous door pockets and displays showing only the most important information, to reduce the visual clutter.

Thrown out are items you may only miss occasionally, or not at all. They include a rev counter, wind-up rear windows (they hinge instead), a passenger sun visor mirror and split/folding rear seat (it's in one piece, to save weight).

Then you'll notice the lack of buttons and switches for the sound system, sat nav and heating. They're all controlled from the nicely large touchscreen that dominates the dashboard.

Again, nicely minimal if you're a designer, but often more of a fiddle to work than a simple button push.

Ownership

The boot is big enough for family duties and the rear bench will seat adults without complaint. Both driver and front seat passenger were surprised to feel the join between seat back and base, almost as though there was a sock stuffed into the upholstery, an effect that lessened with mounting miles.

An aim of the team behind the C4 Cactus was reducing the cost of ownership. The range starts at £12,990 and tops out at £18,190, a price point some way from inexpensive. You might consider the lower reaches of the line up represent best value.

The test car sits just three down from the top of the pile but does come very well equipped.

Highlights include the sat nav already mentioned (but steer clear of its 'Eco' route choice, which loves daft detours), parking sensors, handsome black alloy wheels, a commendably clear reversing camera and a good sound system with DAB radio.

Extra on the test car included a giant, fixed sunroof (good value at £395) and a space saver tyre (£75) a much appreciated swap for the standard tin of aerosol gloop.

Power choices range across a series of petrol and diesel engines, with the 1.2 three-cylinder petrol unit in the test car the most powerful on offer. It packs a useful punch and still proved decently economical, showing 51mpg in a week that included a dramatic heavy throttle run to compensate for a mad Sunday selection of roadworks, and a tight schedule to keep.

Not that you'll want to hurry the Cactus too much; it's more comfortable at a jog, where if you pick the right road (not too pock-marked) it's a genuinely relaxing place to spend time in.

Ask it for a sporty turn and it politely asks you to calm down.

But take the C4 Cactus on its own terms – family friendly transport with a sensible twist – and you'll have a car to enjoy.

TESTED

Citroen C4 Cactus Flair PureTech 110

Engine: 108bhp petrol

Warranty: Three years or 60,000 miles

Economy: TheC4 Cactus can do 60.1mpg

Insurance group: 16

Price: £17,190

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2006 56 KIA SORENTO 2.5 XE Diesel, Auto, 70,000 miles, Service History, alloys, leather, air con etc.

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2006 06 FORD FIESTA ZETEC 1.4 TDCi DIESEL 5 door, Black, only 62,000 miles, Alloys, E/locking, E/windows, etc £3795
2006 06 HONDA CIVIC S CDTi DIESEL 5 door, Metallic Grey, Air Con, Alloys, PAS, C/locking, E/windows £5495
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2005 05 RENAULT MEGANE 2.0 DYNAMIQUE CONVERTIBLE Black with black leather, alloys, air con etc £2695
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2009 09 PEUGEOT EXPERT TEPEE 1.6 HDi Metallic Red, 8 Seater + Rear wheelchair access, 60,000 miles, FSH £6995
2006 56 KIA SORENTO 2.5 XE Diesel, Auto, 70,000 miles, Service History, alloys, leather, air con etc £6695
2006 56 SSANGYONG KYRON 2.0 Diesel, Auto, alloys, leather, air con, e/windows, FSH £3995
2004 54 HYUNDAI TRAJET GSi 2.0 CRTD Seven seater, diesel, only 65,000 miles, FSH, e/windows, c/locking, privacy glass, rear air con £3295

AUTOMATICS
2009 58 RENAULT MODUS VVT AUTOMATIC Silver, 5-door. PAS, C/locking, air con, alloys etc, one lady owner, FSH, only 36,000 miles £4695
2007 07 NISSAN NOTE SE AUTOMATIC 5-door. Bronze, E/windows, C/locking, PAS, 48,000 miles, full service history £4695
2005 05 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.4 DESIGN 3-door. Automatic, PAS, C/locking, E/windows, 34,000 miles, full service history £3295
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2004 04 FIAT PUNTO 1.2 3-door, Red, demo + one owner, 60,000 miles, service history, e/windows, c/locking £1995
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2005 05 MINI ONE CONVERTIBLE Silver, 64,000 miles, FSH, electric roof, alloys, CD, e/windows, c/locking

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2009 59 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.0 LIFE 3-door. Red, c/locking, e/windows, CD player, full service history

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DRIVETIME

Leon Cupra is first high performance SEAT estate

By David Banner

SEAT has begun a new chapter with its iconic Cupra sub-brand through the unveiling of its first ever high performance estate, the Leon ST Cupra.

Combining effortless performance with style and spaciousness in spades, the latest addition to the Leon stable boasts a load space of up to 1,470 litres and can shift from nought to 62 mph in just six seconds – only a shade, 0.2 seconds, slower out of the blocks than its five-door sibling.

The SEAT Leon Cupra range already has hordes of admirers, from media all across Europe to those who sample their charms on a daily basis. The new Leon ST Cupra adds a new dimension. For work and family, for sports and hobbies – with its added versatility, it's the ideal everyday sports car.

Examples

In the UK, the ST Cupra's 2.0 TSI engine with dual injection and variable camshaft timing will be tuned to 280PS. The Dynamic Chassis Control (DCC), front differential lock, progressive steering, Cupra Drive Profile and standard-fit full-LED headlights are further examples of its state-of-the-art technologies.

With the new Leon ST Cupra, a success story is moving onto the next level. The first generation was launched in 1996 with the Ibiza, followed since by an array of dynamic Cupra models which have developed to become icons of the SEAT brand. In the latest generation, the Leon three-door is being offered for the first time as a Cupra – and now the Leon ST is too.

Cupra stands for power, performance, dynamics– and the new Leon ST Cupra fulfils each of these promises perfectly. The ST Cupra 280 with optional DSG transmission, the brand's top model, catapults from zero to 62 mph in just six seconds (6.1 seconds with the manual gearbox). Its broad spread of torque, ranging from 1,700 to 5,600 rpm, guarantees impressive pulling power in every situation.

Against this, the new Leon ST Cupra is astonishingly efficient, with fuel economy of 42.8 (DSG) and 42.2 (manual). This equates to CO2 figures of just 154 and 157 grams per kilometre. Making it even more intriguing is the availability of the 'Sub8 Performance Pack' on ST Cupra. The optional pack includes larger Brembo brake callipers, specially-designed 19in multi-spoke alloy wheels in either black or orange and body-coloured side skirts. For £2,025 including VAT. Semi-slick Michelin Pilot Sport Cup 2 tyres, as fitted to SEAT's fastest production car when it became the first front-wheel-drive production car to dip under the then elusive eight-minute Nürburgring Nordschleife circuit lap time, are available for £460.

Standard

The top sports seats in alcantara, the Cupra steering wheel and Media System Plus with a 5.8in colour touchscreen are all among the standard interior features. One particular feature in the Cupra interior is the ambient lighting. LEDs in the door panels emphasise the contours of the interior and add to the premium feel of the passenger compartment.

At the same time, the ambient lighting offers occupants improved orientation and an even greater sense of spaciousness. The colour of the LEDs can be adapted via the Cupra Drive Profile – they glow red in Cupra mode, with the standard setting being white.

The look of the Leon ST Cupra can be enhanced with the optional White Line, Black Line and Orange Line packs. The surrounds of the radiator grille and door mirrors and parts of the two-tone aluminium wheels are painted in the respective colour – with the Orange Line standing for Cup Racer orange.

UK pricing and specification will be announced shortly, ahead of launch in March 2015.

Indoor cricket training to start

CANNOCK Cricket Club start their indoor training on Monday, January 26.

The Club, who are seeking new sponsors for the 2015 season, invite juniors of all abilities at the following times:

Under 9 and Under 11 (school year two to six) 6pm to 7pm Kingsmead Technology College, Kings Avenue, Hednesford. WS12 1DH

Under 13 (school year seven and eight) 6pm to 7.15pm, Cannock Chase High School Upper Sports Hall, Hednesford Road, Cannock. WS11 1JT.

Under 15 and 16 (school year nine to 11) 7.15 to 8.30pm, Cannock Chase High School Upper Sports Hall.

All sessions will run weekly until Easter. The cost is £3 per session.

Coaching will be given by some of the 18 fully qualified and CRB cleared coaches who have passed ECB courses in the past few years.

New senior players are welcome to train on Mondays from 8.30 to 10pm, again at Cannock Chase High.

This coming season, the club will be playing on Saturdays in the Staffs Club Cricket Championship. For more information, contact Graham Machin on 07836 371 043.

Molineux's a momument to club's hero

IT was the house that Sir Jack built. A glistening, gleaming, glorious football stadium good enough to rival almost any in the land.

It was fully unveiled for the country to marvel at in 1994. But just three years earlier Molineux was nothing more than a glorified park.

Crumbling dilapidated stands, a pudding of a pitch, mobile cabins for changing rooms and players training on a car park – this was the Wolves that Sir Jack inherited.

He had bought the club in 1990 for £2.1m and set about waving a magic wand to give his beloved Wolves a breathtaking financial shot in the arm.

Football

His rallying cry upon taking over was: "Let's make Wolves the leading club in Britain once more."

The team itself was on the up, with the heroics of supreme goalscorer Steve Bull and manager Graham Turner propelling Wolves from the fourth tier of English football to the second.

Sir Jack, speaking in 1990, added: "We want to get into the First Division and then win the First Division title. And we want to win the FA Cup. In other words, we want to make Wolves the leading club in Great Britain – which they once were.

"The name of Wolverhampton Wanderers is known all over the world and we want to make sure that continues. This is a great day and I'm thrilled and delighted to be involved."

But Sir Jack wanted a stadium, a platform, on which to take Wolves to the next level. He dug deep into his pockets without a second thought to transform Molineux and restore pride into every single Wolves fan, giving each and every one of them a 'second home' to be proud of. There was talk of a new ground being built away from Molineux, but Sir Jack poured cold water on that.

He said: "A lot of people have said to me that the club could move to a new ground out near the M54 or somewhere similar. But Molineux and Wolves go together. The ground is in a super location and it's part of Wolves' history."

The huge redevelopment was completed in stages, one stand at a time, with Molineux visibly rising from the ashes year after year.

First to be built was the old North Bank, named the Stan Cullis Stand.

Boxing heirs have eyes on the throne

POPULAR Dudley light middleweight, Ryan Aston, has been added to Black Country Boxing's 'Heir To The Throne' bill in Cannock next month.

Tank, defeated just once in 16 professional contests, will looking to kick on this year after a solid 2014 that saw him record three victories including two stoppages.

The exciting 23 year-old has been added to a bumper bill of boxing at the Chase Leisure Centre on Saturday, 28th February 2015.

"It's great to have Ryan on the show," explained Errol Johnson. "He's a talented fighter who is always in entertaining fights. He's young, hungry and is a perfect fit to what is shaping up to be a great card."

Stafford's undefeated fighter, Grant Cunningham, tops the bill as he steps down a weight to take on Damon Jones.

Tank's stablemate, Luke Paddock (Walsall), is also in action as he makes a maiden defence of his Midlands Area Light Welterweight Title against Newark's Fergus Taylor.

The show takes place at Chase Leisure Centre, Stafford Road, Cannock, Staffordshire, WS11 4AL. Call01543 504065

Sir Jack is honoured with Wolves victory

Wolves 2 Blackpool 0

IT was a day when an entire city hoped, prayed and wished for three points.

And for those fortunate enough to be among the 28,132 inside Molineux on Saturday, it was a day nobody will forget. The biggest crowd of the season packed into the golden palace to prove Wolves knows how to say goodbye to one of its greats.

Sir Jack Hayward was a man who always let everyone know much he loved Wolverhampton.

But on Saturday everyone inside the stadium which he built showed just how Wolverhampton loves him.

Blackpool had their first sniff at goal when a shanked Danny Batth clearance was seized upon by Nathan Delfouneso 25 yards out.

But, despite being unchallenged, the former Aston Villa striker sliced a shot well wide of Carl Ikeme's goal.

The Lancashire side had seen almost none of the ball but they again went close with Ikeme having to deny Andrea Orlandi and Steven Davies in quick succession.

The attacks seemed to rattle Wolves who responded with Kevin McDonald sending van La Parra galloping away down the right flank.

With Nouha Dicko screaming for the ball in the box, the gifted Dutchman delayed his cross a second too long and the ball was cleared – an earlier pass would have given the Mali international a simple side-foot home.

Molineux burst into a joyous roar when a tackle from Price sent O'Hara flying into the air.

Football

Wolves should have taken the lead before half-time when Dave Edwards was presented with a golden chance.

The midfielder took the ball into the box but with just the keeper to beat screwed his shot horribly wide to miss "an absolute sitter."

The second half started in cagey fashion with Wolves' game plan seemingly to get the ball wide to van La Parra at every occasion. The winger was proving a constant threat and he twice burst forward down the right but both times was found guilty of delaying his cross when earlier deliveries were needed.

Jackett switched things up just before the hour mark with debutant striker Benik Afobe brought on for Henry.

It meant Dicko moved to wide left.

Four minutes from time Wolves finally got the goal. Midfielder van La Parra delivered a fine cross which was smashed home by Edwards for his fourth goal in three games.An error saw Afobe score.

Wolves academy treat for school team

Chase View team, Ryley Archer, Mackenzie John, Jake Cartwright, Dan Martin, Reiss Walters, Rhys Williams and Alfie Wass with the Wolves coaches and Under-11 team

THE school football team from Chase View Primary were given a thrill with a visit the new Wolverhampton Wanderers training academy at Compton.

The invitation came from Wolves head of youth development Marc Campbell who had heard of the team's success in becoming school football champions of Staffordshire and wanted to do something special to celebrate their achievement.

With one of the Chase View team, goalkeeper Rhys Williams, already a Wolves academy Under-10 player and attending Compton four times a week, the coaching staff at Wolves knew of the sporting pedigree at Chase View.

The boys were given a guided tour of the facilities, which opened early November and saw behind the scenes in the fitness suite, education area and most importantly the dome.

Incredibly the playing surface and area meets the standards required for the UEFA Champions league and is really impressive.

In the changing rooms and leisure area they saw the names and photos of players past and present who began as young boys at Wolves and went on to make the big time, including Robbie Keane and Joleon Lescot. After the tour the boys were given a two part training session.

Fears of £2m fraud at Blues

THE company that owns Birmingham City FC said it believes a former employee may have "misappropriated" £2.5m.

Birmingham International Holdings said it had reported the matter to the Hong Kong police.

The company said the loss "may have a material impact on the operation and financial situation of the group".

It was also concerned that the matter was apparently missed by auditors.

Shares in the Hong Kong-based company were suspended six weeks ago and will not resume trading until further notice.

BIH said it would consider setting up an investigation committee.

Boukari is put out by groin injury

LUCKLESS Razak Boukari has suffered yet another injury blow – as Scott Golbourne returns to contention at Wolves.

The £2.5m winger has a groin strain and will be out for up to three weeks.

Boukari was due to make his comeback with Golbourne in today's visit of Brentford to Compton, postponed in any event due to a frozen pitch.

"Boukari has a groin strain which he did last Friday and will be out for two to three weeks," said head coach Kenny Jackett.

"He's picked up a lot of injuries.

"I haven't been able to give him a chance yet and would like to give him an opportunity."

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165.70-13	£32	195.65-15	£40	195.50-15	£40	225.45-17	£49
165.70-14	£34	185.60-14	£36	195.45-15	£43	205.50-17	£50
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Mali is looking at Sako to bring fire

MALI will be looking to Wolves danger man Bakary Sako for a creative spark when they kick off their Africa Cup of Nations campaign against Cameroon.

Henryk Kasperczak's side suffered a blow two weeks before the tournament when they lost Bordeaux's leading scorer Cheick Diabate to a serious knee injury and the onus will now be on the Molineux marksman to help fill the void.

The speedy winger has scored 28 goals and 27 assists in exactly 100 league appearances for Wolves and will be expected to provide the ammunition for Mustapha Yatabare and Modibo Maiga, who will spearhead the attack in Diabate's absence.

Sako will be joined in midfield by Roma's Seydou Keita, who is playing in his seventh Cup of Nations and has seven tournament goals to his credit.

Former Polish midfielder Kasperczak is in his second spell as Mali coachhaving lifted the Eagles to fourth place in 2002 when they were the host nation. They have finished third in the last two finals and hopes of similar success will be high.

Cameroon are formidable Group D opposition.

Ladies overcome delay to take the win

Cannock Ladies 3rds 3
Dudley Ladies 1sts 1

Cannock Ladies 3rds played host to struggling Dudley. The weather delayed he game by 30 minutes which didn't help with the teams preparations.

Good work from Emma Smith allowed Holly Dean to open the scoring.

Cannock failed to take advantage of their dominance and Dudley began to make chances eventually finding an equaliser.

The home side, obviously frustrated, began to make poor decisions but Amelia James managed to put Cannock ahead 2-1 just before halftime. The game remained very scrappy, a Holly Dean finish gave Cannock a 3-1 win to remain top of Staffs Division 1.

The highlight of the game was the return of Captain Vickie Wilkes after three months out. Cannock head to Aldridge next week before their crunch match with second placed Stafford in two weeks' time.

Cannock Ladies 4ths 0
Stone Ladies 2nds 2

Cannock started off shaky, being the first game back since the Christmas break and it took 10 minutes to shake some of the cobwebs away.

They played well, with end to end action, however stone saw a crack in the defence and while the defenders looked at the goalie still on the floor from the previous save worried the game continued around them, 1-0 Stone.

Cannock came out fighting in the second half, their spirit was high. Despite this, Stone found another crack in the defence and after a scrap in the D doubled their lead. Cannock held strong and continued to fight, however they missed a connection between the hard work by the midfield to get to the forwards to finish it. Georgia Lloyd and Laura D'Aguilar being named woman of the match.

They travel to Bloxwich next week, hoping to return to winning ways before the Tamworth double in the beginning of February.

Cannock Ladies 5ths vs Dudley 2nds

Cannock Fiths' fixture fell victim to snow and low temperatures. They were due to face Dudley 2nds away.

Late strike saves Khalsa's streak

Sporting Khalsa 1
Ellesmere Rangers 1

A late equaliser by Mensah Kinch kept Sporting Khalsa's unbeaten run intact after being tested to the limit by the only side to have taken points off them this season.

The first half was dominated by the hosts with Craig Bannister in the thick of the chances early on.

Ian Rowe's men were left to rue the missed chances on 32 minutes when Paddy Townsend picked up a loose ball as Ellesmere made a rare excursion forward, the linesman's flag stayed down and the striker finished in style to put the visitors ahead against the run of play.

Simeon Townsend wasted a chance to equalise on 36 minutes, clearing the crossbar from a pinpoint Nisbett cross.

The second half saw Ellesmere successfully stifle Khalsa's creative excursions and wrestle more of the possession for themselves.

Parker made a timely intervention on 52 minutes to stop the dangerous looking Wherton in his tracks after he was put through by Kinch.

With just three minutes to play, Kinch fired past the keeper.

Winless streak comes to an end for Scholars

Chasetown 3 Brigg Town 0

CHASETOWN ended an 11-match winless run with a comprehensive first half display to see off bottom club Brigg Town.

It was the Scholars' first three-point haul in Evo-Stik Division One South since October 14, when they beat Coalville Town. The home side were in control from the start and appealed for a penalty when Jermaine Johnson was brought down, to no avail.

However, they deservedly took the lead in the 15th minute when Johnson curled a cross to the far post and Danny Edwards volleyed home from a tight angle and which would prove to be the run of the game as The Scholars were heading towards a shut out.

Johnson then sent a header over the target as Chasetown pressed for a second goal but this time they came up empty.

However, it wasn't long before it duly arrived just before the half-hour mark, when Edwards fired goalwards with his shot deflecting past a flat-footed Jody Barford.

Johnson ready to celebrate again when he thought he had made it 3-0 with the ball in the net before halftime, but the officials had other ideas and his headed effort was disallowed for offside.

Brigg were more spirited after the interval and stemmed the flow of Chasetown's attacks, but without really troubling keeper John Bateman but the home side had no intention of loosing their grip on the game and allow their opponents back in. However, Brigg's keeper Barford made a great save to deny Chasetown leading scorer Nathan Waite and then Scholars striker Nick Turton thought he had got his side's third when he too had the ball in the net but this was also deemed offside.

In the final minute, substitute Lee Butler rounded off a three-goal victory with a 40-yard effort over the head of the stranded Barford which sealed the game for The Scholars.

Chasetown have now moved up two places to 16th in the table after coming away from this clash with a much-needed win.

Chasetown: Bateman, Smith, Beckett, Slater, Miles, Johnson, Brown (Butler 68), Parsons, Waite (Turton 77), Davies, Edwards.

Subs not used: Haynes, Danks, Pond.

Brigg Town: Barford, Simpson, Ragan, Bowsley, Booker, McKay, Fields (Plumtree), Peers (Wattam), Callam, Whitehead, Collishaw (Hewitt).

Subs not used: Crozier, Thompson.

The Brigg Town keeper is well beaten by Danny Edwards' shot during the shut out against the Scholars

We need all our fans, says Smith

DEAN SMITH is overjoyed at the news Walsall's Johnstone's Paint Trophy showdown with Preston has sold out and told supporters: "We need you all behind us."

Walsall will be backed by a capacity home crowd when they take their shot at a first-ever Wembley appearance next Tuesday, after fans snapped up the handful of remaining tickets.

The Saddlers take a 2-0 lead into the Northern Area Final second leg and Smith said: "It just shows it has caught the imagination of everyone but it is going to be a really tough game and we need everyone behind us."

His team who are preparing for the game are without a fixture this Saturday.

Afobe had perfect day with win

STRIKER Benik Afobe described his Wolves debut as the "perfect day" after he scored the goal that ensured a fitting send-off for Sir Jack Hayward.

The 21-year-old, who only completed his move from Arsenal lastWednesday, is already enjoying cult-like status after coming off the bench and helping Wolves to a 2-0 win over Blackpool.

On a day where all that mattered was getting a win for Sir Jack, Afobe was introduced in the second half and gave a real spark to Wolves' frontline.

Dave Edwards made the breakthroughbefore Afobe settled matters in the 90th minute.

"It really was the perfect day," the striker said.

Family & Friends Announcements

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SPORT

Sir Jack sorrow
Wolves win honours 'saviour' of Molineux
Page 102

Losing streak
Winless run ended with Scholars' victory
Page 103

Sports Desk 01902 319531 email: Chronsport@expressandstar.co.uk

We can get title declares Edwards

DAVE EDWARDS insisted Wolves can win the Championship if they continue their current form.

Saturday's 2-0 win against Blackpool saw Kenny Jackett's side remain eighth but they are only a point off the play-off zone, with a six-point gap to ninth-placed Sheffield Wednesday.

Victory at the weekend made it six games unbeaten in the league for Wolves, with five wins and just two goals conceded.

And in-form Edwards, who took his tally to four goals in three games on Saturday and six for the season, is convinced Wolves can repeat their 2008-09 title win.

"We just need to keep winning and I'm sure we'll be up there come the end of the season," said Edwards.

"The last time we were promoted from the Championship we had that little wobble in January-February time.

"We like to think we've had our wobble now – we had our dismal run in November. We've reacted really well to that by winning games, playing good football, scoring goals and keeping clean sheets.

"That's the mantra at the football club and I really think we can get up there. We're not far off the top either. But we can't get carried away."

Results from bowls event

Briggs Equipment Indoor Bowls Results

Division One

A and G Parsons 15 D Hayward and V Gray 21; M Evans and L Pritchatt 12 S Edwards and P Cookson 21; L Cavill and M Bardsley 21 B Preece and K Hocknell 15; D and G Storer 21 S Powis and D Hurcombe 12; N Newey and L Hazlehurst 18 K Handley and D Chester 21; B Preece and K Hocknell 21 A and G Parsons 17

Division Two

C Everitt and S Edwards 21 A Chambers and A Westwood 15; T Partridge and B Stacey 7 A Preece and F Statham 21; A Allcock and K Johnson 20 C Everitt and S Edwards 21; S and C Baird 21 M and P Colbourne 18; L Simonczyk and P Kelly 18 G Garbett and B Taylor 21; R Worthington and P Lines 5 A Chambers and A Westwood 21

Sir Jack showed he was one in a million

Football

SOME say his legacy is the Golden Palace he proudly built.

But Sir Jack Hayward's impact on Wolves and the club it has become goes far deeper than the foundations of the new Molineux he bankrolled in the early 1990s. In keeping with the outstanding philanthropy he bestowed on other projects, Sir Jack showed that when it came to showing his affection for things he loved, generosity knew almost no bounds.

You only have to think of the nominal £10 fee Steve Morgan paid Sir Jack for Wolves in 2007. But that small sum was reliant on the new owner investing £30m in the club. Sir Jack believed Wolves were the true property of the fans.

He has been described as the saviour of the club, something which isn't strictly true as Wolves were already in the second tier when Sir Jack bought the club for £2.1m. But what he did in the 17 years that followed was little short of breathtaking.

A crumbling Molineux with two sides of the ground condemned was transformed into one of the most modern in the country – a gleaming 28,500-capacity, all-seater stadium.

More than two decades on, it's difficult now to convey the pride and importance of having four sides of the ground 'active'.

Long-suffering fans had spent seven years of only being able to watch matches from two stands, one a huge but crumbling terrace, the other positioned some 40 yards from the pitch.

It felt as if Sir Jack had given the club and whole region its pride back. His decision to draft Billy Wright onto the board was a masterstroke as he re-connected the club's golden past with its present.

Similar decisions followed that showed not just sound commercial sense, but an unflinching pride in his home town club as he renamed stands after favourite sons Stan Cullis and Steve Bull and commissioned statues of Wright and Cullis.

And if that wasn't enough, Wolves became one of the biggest spenders and highest wage payers in the countryAll of it was down to one man – Sir Jack. For that, we have to say a big thank you – to Sir Jack.

● **Monument – Page 102**

MAGIC MARVIN GRABS WINNER

Hednesford 2 Chorley 1

MARVIN Robinson shot Hednesford Town to within touching distance of the Conference North play-off places.

The Pitmen came from behind to see off promotion rivals Chorley. The striker's double helped them recover from conceding an eighth-minute goal, and re-ignited their hopes following Tuesday's frustrating late defeat at Barrow.

Football

Gary Flitcroft's Chorley, with play-off ambitions of their own, started far the brighter as Chris Simm broke clear of a leaden-footed Hednesford defence inside the opening minute and lobbed the ball over the onrushing Dan Crane, only to see the ball bounce on the six-yard line and land on the roof of the net.

Misjudgment

Simm was involved in the opening goal seven minutes later when Crane made a hugely unfortunate misjudgement, as the usually reliable goalkeeper took a total air shot to present the big striker with an easy chance to score.

Hednesford had a mountain to climb but to their credit they showed great spirit to bounce back immediately as James Hurst burst down the right wing to set up Robinson at the near post to equalise.

Just five minutes later, Jamey Osborne epitomised the desire of the home side by winning the ball in midfield and playing a fantastic ball through to Robinson who finished well to turn the game completely on its head.

The Pitmen had the wind in their sails and showed immense hunger and desire to create a further three chances to score before half-time.

With captain Darren Campion substituted due to injury, Glenn Walker was a roving pacy replacement at left-back and he skipped easily beyond Ross to set up Richard Batchelor who dragged his shot wide.

Then down the opposite flank Osborne brilliantly created an opening for Robinson who stabbed over the bar when off-balance.

Paul McCone and Ben Bailey were competing very strongly with Chorley's sizeable attack but were almost caught out when Simm broke free but could only scuff his shot across goal on 23 minutes.

Hednesford had an excellent chance shortly before the interval when Osborne's wonderful through ball found debutant Nick Rushton who was denied by an outstanding point-blank save from Sam Ashton..

Marvin Robinson scores the equaliser for the Pitmen against Chorley and Hednesford went on to win

Doyle is not being recalled

KEVIN Doyle has been told he remains down the pecking order for a striking place at Wolves.

Boss Kenny Jackett insists Doyle is behind current front three Rajiv Van La Parra, Nouha Dicko and Benik Afobe, as well as probably Leon Clarke.

The 31-year-old forward, who is out of contract this summer, has returned from his loan at Crystal Palace and Jackett says there is no interest in him, though Middlesbrough have again been linked with the Ireland international.

Doyle was pencilled in to play in a reserve game at Compton against Brentford along with Tomasz Kuszczak, Sam Ricketts, Roger Johnson, Georg Margrietter, Scott Golbourne, Ethan Ebanks-Landell, Michael Jacobs, Lee Evans and Leon Clarke. But the game was called off.

"I was looking forward to seeing him play, coming back, but that's not going to happen because the game is off," said Jackett. "On Saturday, will I be persevering with combinations of Rajiv Van La Parra, Nouha Dicko and Benik Afobe?

"Yes I will."

Cut mistakes, says Chambers

JAMES CHAMBERS says Walsall's Jekyll and Hyde form has to stop if they are to make their Wembley dream a reality.

The centre-half is gearing up for the Saddlers' Johnstone's Paint Trophy clash with Preston.

"At the moment we are not in the greatest form at home," said Chambers.

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